

## AGO POLICY II.23

## SOCIAL NETWORKING FOR AGENCY PURPOSES

**Contact:** Information Services Division  
Director

**Cross References:** *RCW 42.52.160; Bar Association and Legal Professional Activities; Discrimination Complaint Policy & Procedure; Internet Services Use; Records Retention and Destruction Policy and AGO Records Retention Schedule; Sexual Harassment Policy; Software on AGO Computers Policy; Use of State Resources Policy; Social Media Best Practices Wiki*

**Approved:** October 29, 2013

### I. POLICY STATEMENT:

**The purpose of this policy is to define and establish the use of social media in the workplace for agency purposes.**

#### A. Overview:

Social media, used for social networking, refers to providers or services that use the Internet for blogging, microblogging, photo sharing, video sharing, wikis, discussion boards and networking. The Internet is available to support the goals, objectives and operation of the AGO. Its use is subject to the restrictions set out in the *Internet Services Use, Software on AGO Computers and Use of State Resources* policies, including applicable ethical standards. In addition, there is a *Social Media Best Practices Wiki* which, while not a part of this policy, will provide staff with information to assist them in their use of social media tools.

#### B. Permitted Use:

Staff may use social media only for approved agency purposes, including professional networking, to support the mission of the office provided they follow the *Use of State Resources* policy. Use of social media for personal purposes is not permitted on AGO equipment; there will be no de minimis use.

Social media shall not be used to transmit information or knowingly connect to sites for an unlawful or prohibited purpose, including, but not limited to, the following examples:

- Discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, gender, religion, age, marital status, national origin, sensory, mental, or physical disability, sexual orientation or veteran status;
- Sexual harassment or sites containing sexual content;
- Transmission of obscene materials;

**APPROVED**  
**Executive Ethics Board**

Date: 1-10-14

- Infringement on any copyright;
- Expression of any campaign, political or religious beliefs;
- The conduct of a personal, outside business, or other financial benefit or gain.

Failure to abide by policies established for use of social media or participation in any activity inconsistent with the AGO values of excellence and effectiveness, may result in the loss of social networking privileges. As with any policy, violation may also result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Users of social media sites should take into consideration the lack of anonymity and should exercise sound judgment, including considering whether usage may impact work performance, office morale or overtime issues. As with any work product the *Records Retention and Destruction Policy* and *Public Records Requests—Processing Policy* apply. In addition, attorneys should be mindful of the *Rules of Professional Conduct* whenever using social media sites for any purpose. These considerations apply also when using personal devices for social media for agency purposes.

### C. Privacy:

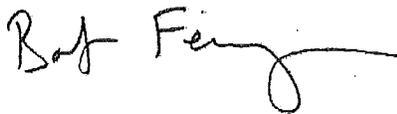
The Internet is an unsecured publicly accessible network. **Employees and volunteers should have no expectation of privacy in the use of Internet resources. Owners of Internet sites commonly monitor usage activity and those activities may be disclosed to any number of parties.**

**The AGO reserves the right to monitor Internet usage at such times and in such circumstances as appropriate.**

Social media shall not be used to distribute privileged or confidential material.

## II. RESPONSIBILITIES:

*All employees* shall understand and follow the guidelines contained in this policy. *Employees* seeking to setup a social networking account for AGO business purposes must complete the *Social Networking Use Agreement* and obtain **Division Chief** approval. A scanned copy of the document will be provided to Information Services and Public Affairs by the *division* and the *division* retains the original. *Employees* must read the Terms of Service when setting up accounts so provisions and risks contained in the site are known. *Employees* should read the *Social Media Best Practices Wiki* so they are familiar with how to most effectively use the service.



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BOB FERGUSON  
Attorney General

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Executive Ethics Board  
Date: 1-10-14

# Office of the Attorney General Social Networking Use Agreement

As a service to those employees who require it, the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) allows for the use of social media, also known as social networking, for approved agency purposes. This agreement is intended to clarify the uses and grant user permissions. Staff are encouraged to review the AGO Social Media Best Practices and Education materials available on ACE.

## Agreement:

Staff may use social media as a tool for approved agency purposes only, including professional networking, to further the mission of the office provided they follow the Use of State Resources policy. Use of social media for personal purposes is not permitted on AGO equipment; there will be no de minimis use.

As a Social Media user my signature below indicates my understanding of, and agreement to comply with, the following conditions of use:

- I will use social media as a tool for approved agency purposes only, including professional networking, to further the mission of the office provided I follow the Use of State Resources policy. My use will be as follows:

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- I understand that use of social media for personal purposes is not permitted on AGO equipment; there will be no de minimis use.
- I will not use social media to transmit information or knowingly connect to sites for an unlawful or prohibited purpose.
- I will not use social media to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, gender, religion, age, marital status, national origin, sensory, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation or veteran status;
- I will not transmit obscene materials;
- I will not use social media to express any campaign, political or religious beliefs;
- I am aware that the AGO may monitor my activities for possible AGO or state policy violations.
- Failure to abide by policies established for use of social media or participation in any activity inconsistent with AGO values (THRICE) may result in the loss of social media privileges. As with any policy, violation may also result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

I have read, understand and agree to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Division

\_\_\_\_\_  
Division Chief Signature (Required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lead Support Signature (as needed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Instructions for Leads: Scan signed agreement and email to ISD Customer Support at [ask4isd@atg.wa.gov](mailto:ask4isd@atg.wa.gov)  
Retain original document in accordance with record retention policy.**



All Content

Advanced Search

ACE &gt; Committees &gt; Social Media Workgroup &gt; Social Media Wiki &gt; Index

## Index

### Social Media Best Practices and Education

The Social Media Best Practices Group has compiled this document to assist AGO staff when working with social media. Social media offers the opportunity to interact with the public and employees in new and dynamic ways that facilitate transparency, interactivity and collaboration. These tools engage populations differently than traditional media and enhance existing communication strategies. We encourage AGO staff who are engaged with social media to educate themselves and their colleagues about effective, responsible, and safe use of these emerging tools. The best practices do not constitute an AGO policy. Instead, these best practices are intended to provide staff with information that will assist them in their use of social media tools.

Of course you are required to follow applicable AGO policies, including [II.21 - Social Networking for Business Purposes](#), [II.11 - Internet Services Use](#), and [II.10 - Information Technology Security](#). In particular, it should be noted that AGO policy does not permit personal social networking using state resources.

Note: External linked content in this document is provided solely as background information for your convenience. Linked content does not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the AGO.

#### Index

1. Social Media Basics
  - Definition of Social Media
  - Best Practices with all Social Media
  - Professionalism
  - Tips for specific Social Media tools
    - > FaceBook
    - > Twitter
    - > YouTube
    - > Blogs
    - > WikiPedia
  - Suggestions and Best Practices for Personal Use of Social Media
2. Legal Practice and Investigations
  - Tips for investigating on social media
    - > Tips for investigators and paralegals
    - > Tips for attorneys and others involved in litigation
3. Professional Networking
  - Know Your Platforms
4. Determining Personal versus Professional Use
5. Records Retention and Public Records
6. Policy Development
7. Reference Materials and Additional Information

#### Wiki Updates and Moderation

This Wiki is moderated by [Suzanne Shaw](#) and [Martin Singleton](#). Please contact either Suzanne or Martin with any questions, comments or additions.

This Best Practices Document was produced by participating members of the AGO Social Media Workgroup:

Lisa Balcom, Christina Beusch, Gina Comeau, Allison Croft, Anna Deines, Justin Farmer, Bill Frymire, Janelle Guthrie, Lisa Hilligoss, Sarah Lane, Teri Metcalf, Jenny Singleton, Kelly Wood, and Rich Zwicker; led by Martin Singleton and Suzanne Shaw.

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