



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

SECTION:	Miscellaneous Administrative Policies	POLICY NO.:	907
TITLE:	Social Media Policy		
BOARD ORDERS:	B.O. 25-265	LAST REVISED:	8/28/2025

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to guide and direct employees’ use of official social media accounts for the dissemination of public information.

This policy does not apply to elected officials’ social media accounts that are primarily political or campaign related.

II. DEFINITIONS

“Social media” includes, but is not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, X, Nextdoor, YouTube, LinkedIn, and other similar platforms.

III. POLICY

1. The goal of the County’s social media presence is to provide information to the public, not to debate issues or points of view.
 - a. Where possible, the commenting features of the platform shall be turned “off”, EXCEPT:
 - When the post is intended to solicit public input on a narrowly defined issue or conduct an authorized poll;
 - When soliciting information to aid in County work (such as an investigation or emergency situation);
 - As otherwise authorized by the County PIO.
 - b. Initiation of a new social media account shall require the approval of the County PIO. Existing accounts or the primary County accounts should be utilized before considering creating a new account

2. The County shall identify those employees authorized to use social media on behalf of the County.
 - a. Only those employees who are authorized shall engage in social media activities on behalf of the County.
 - b. Department Directors may authorize staff in writing, with a copy to the employee's HR file and to the County PIO.
 - c. The Deputy County Administrator/Public Information Officer (DCA/PIO) shall maintain a list of authorized social media users.
 - d. The County Administrator and/or Department Directors may revoke an employee's access permission at any time.
3. All social media accounts shall be created using a County-issued email address, whenever possible. This will ensure that:
 - a. Personal and professional communications are separated;
 - b. The County can back up public conversations because the County owns and controls the email address;
 - c. The County can access the site when the employee is out on vacation or otherwise away from the office or leaves employment with the County; and
 - d. The County can determine that the site is legitimately the County's and not a rogue site generated from a private email address.
4. The County shall notify users and visitors to the social media site that the purpose of the site is to facilitate communication between the County and the public. Each account shall contain the following message in the "about" or similar section:

This account is created by Yamhill County. This site is intended to serve as a mechanism for communication between the public and Yamhill County on all topics relevant to County business. Yamhill County reserves the right to remove comments or postings that violate any applicable laws. A list of content that will be removed may be viewed at: <https://yamhillcounty.gov/159/County-Administration>. Postings to this site are public records of Yamhill County and may be subject to disclosure under the Oregon Public Records Law.

Yamhill County does not endorse nor sponsor any advertising posted by the social media host, the social media is a private site. Yamhill County does not guarantee reliability and accuracy of any third-party links.

5. Where possible, all social media accounts will display the County's logo for consistency and authenticity.
6. Social media posts are considered public records if posts are made on an official County account; *or* on a County staff member or official's public or private account which makes or receives comments on County matters.
7. The County and its employees and officials shall not discriminate against public speech based on content or viewpoint. The County, its staff, and its officials may not engage in

viewpoint discrimination. All persons who wish to “friend,” “follow,” “re-tweet,” etc. must be allowed to do so.

- a. County social media accounts shall not friend or follow accounts that are primarily commercial, political, or entertainment in nature. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the PIO.
 - b. Departmental or program accounts shall “friend” or otherwise link to the main County account.
 - c. County accounts may repost or otherwise repeat content from other County departments. Requests to repost non-County agency or partners’ content must be within the scope of County services and policy and approved by the PIO..
8. When commenting functions are turned on, the following content posted by the public may be removed:
- a. Comments not topically related to the particular article being commented upon;
 - b. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
 - c. Profane language or content;
 - d. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination upon the basis of a protected status as defined by state and federal law;
 - e. Inappropriate sexual content or links to inappropriate sexual content;
 - f. Solicitations of commerce, *e.g.*, ads;
 - g. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - h. Private and confidential information;
 - i. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - j. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

These guidelines shall be displayed to all users or made available by hyperlink. Any removed content must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

9. In an emergency event, declared or otherwise described, departmental social media accounts shall repost the information provided on the main County pages or the Sheriff’s Office page, as directed by the County Administrator or Deputy County Administrator/PIO.
- a. Departmental accounts shall not independently post information that has not been approved by the incident PIO, the Deputy County Administrator/PIO, or designees appointed under 9-b.
 - b. Departmental social media posters shall direct all questions from media to the incident PIO, the Deputy County Administrator/PIO or staff designated by the Department Director leading the response or by the County Administrator.
 - c. To avoid the spread of misinformation, comments should be turned off for emergency posts; the Incident Commander or County Administrator may authorize allowing comments at their discretion. Topics and questions that are prevalent in the community should be addressed via public posts, not individual responses.
 - d. County employees shall not post information on their, or others’ individual social

media accounts that is not posted on the official County pages, or otherwise officially released, unless requested to do so by the Incident Commander, Incident PIO, County Administrator, or the Deputy County Administrator/PIO, during the duration of the emergency and recovery period.

Records Retention

1. The County must maintain and preserve social media records in compliance with the Oregon Public Records Law. The Oregon Public Records Laws apply regardless of whether the social media site is hosted by the County or a third party.
2. Those engaged in social media activities must be familiar with the County's records retention schedule. Any posted original content that is not a copy of a preexisting County record must be captured and retained by saving a copy and providing it to the County's records custodian.
 - a. The County may use specialized software to archive social media posts at the discretion of the PIO and IT Director.
 - b. County PIO will be responsible for the primary County accounts; Department accounts are the responsibility of the individual departments.
 - c. Elected officials with accounts that are not election or campaign related, personal, or otherwise political in nature may utilize the County's archival software (subject to applicable state ethics laws and other regulations), but are otherwise solely responsible for archiving of their content and comments.
3. Non-Original Social Media Content Maintained Elsewhere

Any posted content that is a copy of a County record that exists in another location does not need to be separately preserved, provided that the original content is being retained in compliance with the appropriate state or County retention schedule and media preservation requirements.
4. Original Social Media Content

Any posted original content that constitutes a County record and that is not retained elsewhere in compliance with the appropriate state or County retention schedule, must be captured by the County and retained according to the appropriate schedule and preservation requirements and in a format that, as much as practicable, preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. The person who posts the content is responsible for retaining and preserving the record.

 - a. Speeches/Statements/News Releases/Program Activity Records

Content that contains written or photographed accounts of a County event, or summary of such events, posted to social media are considered statements and reports for retention purposes and should be retained using the appropriate retention schedule. If these posts contain policy or historically significant content, they must be retained permanently.
 - b. Correspondence

Incoming messages from the public that arrive via the County's social media account should be treated as correspondence. Messages completely unrelated to the County's activities do not need to be retained. If the message relates to the County's activities or functions, it must be captured and retained per the retention category that most closely corresponds to the content of the message. Staff are advised to respond to correspondence via email or other "offline" messaging

methods and if possible, communicate directly with the individual and maintain that correspondence.

c. Content Associated with a Specific Function or Activity

Information received from the public in response to social media posts used as a public entry point to solicit specific information—such as conducting a poll or to launch a process or placing an order—should be retained along with other records associated with that function or activity using the appropriate retention schedule.

Any staff member in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the County's personnel manual and collective bargaining agreements, up to and including termination.

Appendix A – SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA USER GUIDELINES

The Yamhill County encourages the public to share thoughts as they relate to the topics being discussed on the County’s social media sites. The views expressed in visitor comments reflect those of the comment’s author and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of Yamhill County. Public comments are considered public information and may be subject to monitoring, moderation, and disclosure to third parties, including law enforcement. Users shall refrain from posting, and Yamhill County reserves the discretion to remove:

- a. Comments not topically related to the particular article being commented upon;
- b. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
- c. Profane language or content;
- d. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination of a person or group upon the basis of a protected status under applicable law;
- e. Inappropriate sexual content or links to inappropriate sexual content;
- f. Solicitations of commerce;
- g. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- h. Private and confidential information;
- i. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- j. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

Comments posted on this or other social media sites are not considered public comment for the purposes of a hearing, legal notice, or appeal. To provide public comment on a specific issue please contact the responsible department or the Board of Commissioners’ office for assistance.

These user guidelines may be subject to modification at any time.

Approved by the Yamhill County Board of
Commissioners on 08/28/2025
via Board Order 25-265.