

County of Clinton

Information Technology Policy

Social Media Policy

Adopted: June 9, 2021

1.0 Purpose and Benefits

More people than ever are using social media technologies to create, connect and collaborate online. The term social media is commonly associated with web applications which facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design and collaboration on the World Wide Web. The use of social media presents both opportunity and risk to the County of Clinton (County) and its component agencies and departments (departments). In general, the County supports the use of social media technology to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange to meet business missions and goals.

The purpose of this policy is to promote the use of Social Media as an efficient communication and data gathering tool, and to ensure departments have the information necessary to use social media to their best advantage in supporting County business.

This document establishes countywide social media use policies, protocols, and procedures intended to mitigate the associated risks from use of this technology where possible.

2.0 Authority

This policy has been created by the Clinton County Department of Information Technology, under the direction of the Director of Information Technology, and approved under the authority of the Clinton County Legislature.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to the use of social media technologies by all County employees and approved interns, consultants, service providers, and contractors performing business on behalf of the County or department (users). It is the user's responsibility to read and understand this policy and to conduct their activities in accordance with its terms. In addition, users must read and understand the County's Information Security Policy and its associated policies and standards.

4.0 Information Statement

The information communicated over social media is subject to the same laws, regulations, policies, and other requirements as information communicated in other written forms and formats. All County social media sites shall adhere to applicable state, federal and local laws, regulations and policies including all Information Technology policies and Records Management policies. Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.

Social Media Access

Department Heads, or their designees, are responsible for determining who is authorized to use social media on behalf of the department and for designating appropriate access levels. Social media network access shall be limited to only those with a clear business purpose to use the forum.

Access to social media networks from within the County's IT infrastructure is limited to individuals performing official County business and to users with sufficient Information and Technology security controls. County computers, laptops, and mobile devices used to access social media sites shall have up-to-date software to protect against destructive technical incidents, including but not limited to cyber, virus, and spyware/adware attacks.

The use of social media tools on County IT resources will be monitored with the same methods as defined in the County Information Security Policy and its associated policies and standards.

Departments are responsible for the creation, administration and deactivation of social media accounts. Account authentication information shall only be shared with authorized staff who have been designated by the Department Head, or his/her designee, to fulfill the role of site account administrator. Passwords, or other authentication tokens, must conform to the County's Password and Authentication Standard and must be promptly reset when an employee is removed as an account administrator.

User Responsibilities

Users are responsible for establishing and maintaining content posted to their social media sites on behalf of their department and shall have measures in effect to prevent the posting of inappropriate or technically harmful information and links.

Users:

- must abide by all applicable policies and work rules regarding the use of the Internet when using social media tools for business purposes;
- must not discuss or post confidential, proprietary or otherwise restricted information;
- when speaking on behalf of the County, must be transparent when participating in any online community;
- should disclose their identity and affiliation with the County;
- communicate in a professional manner;
- abide by copyright and other applicable laws;

- must be aware participation online results in a user's comments being permanently available and open to being republished in other media, and that libel, defamation, copyright, and data protection laws apply;
- when communicating on behalf of the County or department, must obtain the necessary authorizations by management and the Public Information Officer, or other designee as appropriate; and,
- must obtain permission before publishing photographs, videos or quotes of others.

When an individual's comments or profile can identify them as an employee of Clinton County, they must:

- only disclose and discuss publicly available information; and
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading, and complies with all County Policies.

When not representing the County, users who publish personal or professional opinions must not invoke their County title. In such cases users must use a disclaimer, such as the following, where technically feasible: "The postings on this site are my own and do not represent the position, strategy, or opinion of the County of Clinton".

Social Media Sites

Users and visitors to County social media sites shall be notified the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between departments and members of the public. County social media site articles and comments are subject to removal, including but not limited to the following types of postings, regardless of format:

- Comments not topically related to the particular article being commented upon.
- Profane language or content.
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical, or mental disability or sexual orientation.
- Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- Solicitations of commerce.
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

Records Management

Department use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format which tracks account information and preserves items which may be considered a record subject to disclosure.

Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to County business, including a list of subscribers and County or public posted communication, may be a public record. Departments must have procedures in effect to preserve published social media content.

The department maintaining the site is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media.

Site content shall be maintained in accordance with its respective Records Retention Schedule and in accordance with County Information Technology policies and procedures. If the content constitutes a public record, it must be disclosed to the public unless an exemption applies.

It is the responsibility of the department to appropriately classify any information posted on social media sites. To avoid issues with records retention policies and laws, it is recommended departments post only information which is not confidential, proprietary or otherwise restricted. All social media sites shall clearly indicate any articles and any other content posted, or submitted for posting, are subject to public disclosure.

Site Monitoring

Department social media sites shall be monitored regularly and prompt corrective action shall be taken when an issue arises which places, or has the potential to place, the County at risk.

Department social media site administrators shall review site activity and content daily for exploitation or misuse.

Departments that allow the public to post comments, links, or material directly onto their social media sites must have an established process to verify postings meet the rules established above.

Departments choosing to use public comments shall consult with County Counsel to develop department-specific disclaimers to meet the County’s legal needs. County Counsel may also be consulted to determine whether to remove comments that violate this policy.

Departments shall be responsible for monitoring employee use of social media and social media sites in accordance with County Information Technology policies and standards.

5.0 Compliance

This policy shall take effect upon publication. Compliance is expected with all County policies and standards. Policies and standards may be amended at any time; compliance with amended policies and standards is expected.

If compliance with this policy is not feasible or technically possible, or if deviation from this policy is necessary to support a business function, departments shall request an exception through the Chief Information Security Officer’s exception process.

6.0 Definitions of Key Terms

Term	Definition

7.0 Contact Information

Submit all inquiries and requests for future enhancements to the policy owner at:

Director of Information Technology
Clinton County Department of Information Technology
137 Margaret Street, Suite 202
Plattsburgh, NY 12901

8.0 Revision History

This policy shall be subject to periodic review to ensure relevancy.

Date	Description of Change	Reviewer
06/09/2021	Initial policy adoption	David Randall, Director of Information Technology

9.0 Related Documents