



**POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROCEDURES**  
**Manual of Policies and Procedures**

Title

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Legal References (includes but is not limited to)	Related Policies/Procedures (includes but is not limited to)	Other References (includes but is not limited to)
IC 4-15-2.2 31 IAC 5	00-03-101  Indiana State Personnel Department Policies and Procedures	NEW

I. PURPOSE:

This policy establishes standards for the proper use and management of social media networks by the Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and its employees. Social Media is changing the means of communication and work on a daily basis. It assists the Indiana Department of Correction by providing a more direct route to reach our stakeholders, communities, and agencies; promotes transparency within the Department; and supplements traditional media sources in providing information.

II. POLICY STATEMENT:

In order to apply communications standards uniformly across all platforms, it is important that staff be informed on how to properly use IDOC social media channels. Staff members are expected to follow all applicable standards and guidelines when representing the Department publicly.

This policy applies to all Department social networking accounts hosted/owned by the Department or hosted through a third party. This applies to all users of Department social networking services that either view or create content including full and part time employees, contractors and volunteers authorized to use owned equipment or network resources. The use of social media by employees, contractors, and volunteers shall be consistent with all Department policies and federal and State laws relating to intellectual property protection, privacy, misuse of government resources, sexual harassment in the workplace, data security, and confidentiality.

III. DEFINITIONS:

For the purpose of this policy and administrative procedure, the following definitions are presented:

- A. APPLICATION: A web-based program or group of programs designed for interactive use to perform a basic task or function.

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- B. COMMISSIONER: The Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Correction.
- C. DEPARTMENT: The Indiana Department of Correction.
- D. DISCIPLINARY ACTION: The administration of a systematic, objective, and non-discriminatory process of corrective measures to a staff person for the purpose of enhancing the staff person's behavior.
- E. FACILITY: Any physical location or area owned, controlled, operated, managed, or used by the Department or controlled by organizations that have contracted with the Department to house or supervise an offender, including all physical locations or areas inside and outside such a location. This includes all correctional facilities (including contractual), Central Office Administration, Parole District Offices, and Indiana Correctional Industries.
- F. DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT: Any unwelcome or unsolicited speech or conduct based on race, sex, genetic information, religion, national origin, age, color, or disabling condition that creates a hostile work environment or circumstances involving quid pro quo as defined in the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and Human Resources Manual.
- G. EMPLOYEE: Any person(s) performing work on behalf of the Department, including contractors and volunteers.
- H. ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Cellular telephones, pagers, PDAs, recorders (tape or digital), cameras, radios, tape/compact disc/mp3 players, etc.
- I. ENDORSE/ENDORSEMENT: The act of pledging or committing support to a program, proposal or person, public support, or approval.
- J. GRAPHIC INTERCHANGE FORMAT (GIF): An image file commonly used for images on the web and sprites in software programs. Unlike JPEG image format, GIFs use lossless compression that does not degrade the quality of the image.
- K. NETWORK OR NETWORKING: Interactions with individuals or groups of individuals in order to exchange information and/or develop professional or personal relationships.
- L. OFFENDER: An adult or juvenile person committed to the Department and housed or supervised in a facility either operated by the Department or with which the Department has a contract, including an adult or juvenile under parole supervision; under county probation supervision following a commitment to the Department; in a minimum security assignment, including an assignment to a Community Transition Program (CTP); or who has been discharged from a commitment to the Department, parole supervision, or county probation

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supervision following a commitment to the Department within the preceding 365 days.

- M. SITE CONTENT MANAGER: A designated individual(s) who is responsible for overseeing the information presented on Social Media sites for an office, facility, division, etc.
- N. SOCIAL MEDIA: A form of electronic communication, such as websites for social networking, through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content. Examples of such social sites are Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
- O. SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT: Any account registered by a facility, division, or section of the Department on a third-party social media site or platform.

IV. INTRODUCTION:

Social media networks are highly efficient research and communications tools that are available through government networks to its employees, contractors, and volunteers to assist them in supporting government functions and conducting government business within its organization, with government and private business partners, and with the public.

The Department uses social media to improve communication with staff and the public and disseminate information to a broader audience of stakeholders.

Approval of the content of social media on behalf of the Department is restricted to the Chief Communications Officer or designee and the Office of Communications.

Employees, contractors, and volunteers using social media on behalf of the Department must be authorized by the Chief Communications Officer or designee.

Offenders shall not be provided or allowed access to social media while committed to the Indiana Department of Correction.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Alleged or suspected violations of the social media policy shall be investigated by the Department with violations referred to the Chief Legal Officer/designee and/or Human Resources.
- B. The Department is responsible for any terms of use or service agreements agreed to when creating social media accounts.
- C. The Department’s Office of Communications shall ensure that information the Department makes available through social media sites is appropriate for public access and editorially suitable.

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- D. Employees shall adhere to the provisions of this policy and administrative procedure.

VI. ALLOWABLE USES:

A. Agency Use of Social Media:

1. The creation of all Department social media sites or pages shall be approved by the Chief Communications Officer or their designee.
2. Each Department social media page shall include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and the scope of the Department’s presence on the website.
3. Social Media pages should link to the Department’s website found online here:  
[www.in.gov/idoc](http://www.in.gov/idoc)
4. Social media pages shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the Department and shall have the Department logo and contact information prominently displayed or the logo of the respective Department facility or group/division.
5. Social media content shall adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all those related to information technology, records management, and e-discovery.

B. The Department shall:

1. Disseminate news and information on services, programs, and events.
2. Enhance outreach.
3. View and post content for research, communication and information exchange related to the Department’s mission or work tasks; training and professional development; and the Department’s programs and services.
4. Announce government laws, procedures, policies, and rules.
5. Provide governmental communications not requiring a high level of security.

VII. PROHIBITED USES:

The Department is prohibited from using social media for the following:

- A. Any purpose that violates federal or State government laws, codes or policies, standards, or procedures;

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- B. Advertising or promoting a private business enterprise or activity not affiliated with the Department;
- C. Access to and/or distribution of pornography, fraudulent information, harassing material; racially discriminatory, disparaging or harassing information (in violation of the State Personnel Department’s sexual harassment policy), and hate speech;
- D. Transmission of statements that contain profane language; pander to bigotry, sexism, or other forms of prohibited discrimination; or can in any way be construed as intending to harass or threaten another individual;
- E. Any activity with political purposes;
- F. Disruption, obstruction, or burden of network resources;
- G. Intentional or negligent introduction of computer viruses into the Department / government network; and,
- H. Sharing sensitive information that could compromise public safety or violate an individual’s privacy.

VIII. DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZED USE:

- A. The use of social media on behalf of the Department is restricted to employees, contractors, and volunteers authorized by the Commissioner or designee and the Chief Communications Officer or designee. The use of social media by authorized Department users shall be consistent with and in adherence to the allowed and prohibited uses by the Department set forth in this policy and administrative procedure.
- B. When using social media on behalf of the Department, the authorized user must:
  - 1. Conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the Department and accordingly, adhere to all Department standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum.
  - 2. Not disclose any agency information or materials unless authorized to do so by the Chief Communications Officer or designee.
  - 3. Follow the Department’s position on issues at all times and not include comments or posts that reflect personal rather than work-related positions on Departmental related issues.
  - 4. Follow policies, procedures, and laws restricting the use of intellectual property such as copyright, trademark and service marks, information protected by confidentiality and privacy laws,

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information protected by the laws of privilege, information subjected to non-disclosure agreements, and other information legally protected from use and disclosure to the public.

- 5. Only use departmentally approved social media sites.
- 6. Not comment or post information on pending litigation, legal matters, private personnel information, and security issues.

**IX. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:**

- A. As public employees, Department personnel are cautioned that their speech either on or off duty may form the basis for disciplinary action. Department personnel shall adhere to Policy and Administrative Procedure 04-03-103, “Information and Standards of Conduct for Departmental Staff.”
- B. Content contributed to personal social media sites by Department personnel shall not claim to represent the Department or its policies.
- C. Employees who reference their membership or employment with the Department shall include a disclaimer that the opinions they post are personal and not the opinion of the Indiana Department of Correction.
- D. A Department employee acting in their private capacity is precluded from engaging in the following activities while on a social media network, personal web pages or blogs:
  - 1. Using language that would lead a reader/viewer to believe that the social media site is operated by the Department.
  - 2. Using any Department patches, logo, or coat of arms. Wearing or displaying a Department logo, uniform or other State-issued clothing can be taken into consideration when deciding on personnel disciplinary action.
  - 3. Using offender images (with or without permission).
  - 4. Using any other material for which the Department holds a copyright, trademark, service mark, patent, or other intellectual property right.
- E. Employees using social media shall not release or reveal confidential, restricted, or other non-public information obtained by virtue of their position with the Department. This includes, but is not limited to, offender identities or institutional information, offender or employee medical and mental health treatment information, personnel information, criminal history record information, security and intelligence information, investigative information, operational concerns, restricted policies and procedures, or privileged information such as facility layout.

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X. IMPROPER USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:

A. In accordance with Policy and Administrative Procedure 04-05-102, “Internet, Electronic mail, and Online IT Services Use.” A Department employee that uses social media in violation of the requirements of this policy and administrative procedure shall be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination consistent with provisions of the applicable District Personnel Manual and the collective bargaining agreement:

1. Chapter 8 Probationary Employees
2. Chapter 9 Expected Service Employees
3. Chapter 16 General Discipline and Grievances
4. Chapter 18, Part 1 Employee Conduct
5. Chapter 38, Management Supervisory Service

B. A contractor or volunteer in violation of this policy and administrative procedure shall be subject to immediate dismissal/removal from their position and shall not be allowed access to the Department’s facilities or technology.

C. Any employee becoming aware of, or having knowledge of any posting, website, or webpage that violates this policy and administrative procedure, shall immediately notify their supervisor, and provide a special report.

XI. APPLICABILITY:

This policy and administrative procedure is applicable to all Department facilities and all Department staff.

signature on file  
Robert E. Carter, Jr.  
Commissioner

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Date