



SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Municipal Water District of Orange County

Social Media Use Policy

**Adopted
August 18, 2010**

I. PURPOSE

The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC or District) recognizes a need to augment its traditional communication methods with the use of Internet-based social media channels. This need is driven by an increased public demand and the rapid growth of social media use among local, state and federal government entities to enhance public/constituent communications and transparency. MWDOC supports the use of social media technology to enhance two-way communication, collaboration and information exchange.

This document establishes MWDOC's social media use policies, protocols and procedures. It also provides guidance to all MWDOC employees and other representatives that work or act on its behalf. MWDOC shall revise this policy as necessary and it will adjust the use social media activity by MWDOC, its staff, and affiliates accordingly.

II. DEFINITIONS

Social Media and Web 2.0 – The U.S. Government defines social media and Web 2.0 as umbrella terms that define the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. Through social media, individuals or collaborations of individuals can create Web content, organize content, edit or comment on content, combine content, and share content. Social media and Web 2.0 use many technologies and forms, including RSS and other syndicated Web feeds, blogs, wikis, photo-sharing, video-sharing, podcast, social bookmarking, mashups, widgets, virtual worlds, micro-blogs, and more.

Official District E-Mail Account – E-mail account created and maintained by the Information Technology (IT) Department for official District business.

General Manager - Refers to the General Manager or his/her designee.

Approved District Social Networking Site – Refers to social networks that the General Manager in coordination with the Public Affairs Department and IT Department, has assessed and approved for use by the District.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all MWDOC employees and other approved District representatives.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

The Board of Directors approved the MWDOC Social Media Policy on xx/xx/xxxx.

The General Manager is responsible for facilitating the MWDOC Social Media Policy in compliance with established rules and protocols. This includes responsibility to audit social media use and enforce policy compliance.

All employees shall be provided a copy of the District's Social Media Policy and are required to acknowledge their understanding and acceptance via wet signature. The Human Resources Department shall maintain a record of each employee's signed Social Media Policy acknowledgement form.

V. GENERAL POLICY

- a. The use of social media technology by any District department shall be approved by the General Manager. The department must conform to the policies, protocols and procedures contained, or referenced, herein.
- b. Access to social media networks from within MWDOC's IT infrastructure shall be extended to employees exclusively to perform District business.
- c. Only official District spokespersons and select individuals, approved by the General Manager, will have permission to create, publish or comment on behalf of MWDOC.
- d. District social media sites shall be created with identifiable characteristics of an official District site and make clear that they are maintained by the District and that they comply with the District's Social Media Policy.
- e. Wherever possible, District social media sites should link back to the official District website to provide additional content and information.
- f. The same standards, principles and guidelines that apply to MWDOC employees in the performance of their assigned duties apply to employee social media technology use. Social media activities pertaining to employee duties or outside of employee work time that negatively affect MWDOC's work or the work of other employees, for example, by undermining its mission, purpose, or credibility with the public, will be subject to investigation, and appropriate action, as determined by MWDOC.
- g. District social media sites and all related content shall be monitored by the IT Department.
- h. The District reserves the right to restrict or remove content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law. Any content removed based on this Social Media Policy shall be retained by the Director of Public Affairs for a reasonable period of time, and include the time, date and identity of the author or individual who posted the content, when available.
- i. The Social Media Policy shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
- j. The District's website www.mwdoc.com will remain the District's primary and predominant Internet presence.

- k. All District social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and policies.
- l. District social media sites are subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to District business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.
- m. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of the District may be removed.
- n. Employees representing the District via District social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the District and in accordance with all District policies.

VI. APPROVED SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS

Only those social media networks approved by the General Manager shall be used for District communications.

- a. Social media networks under consideration will be reviewed and approved by the General Manager, or his/her designee, in consultation with the Public Affairs Department and IT Department, as well as legal counsel and the Human Resources Department when appropriate.
- b. The Public Affairs Department, in consultation with the IT manager, is responsible for maintaining the list of approved social media networks and site related usage standards.
- c. On a semi-annual basis, the Public Affairs Department shall review existing social media networks for changes to terms of use agreements and/or new/expired offerings.
- d. A department may request that the Public Affairs Department review and approve additional social media networks.

VII. OFFICIAL DISTRICT SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

District social media sites shall be created and maintained in accordance with the District's Social Media Policy and identifiable as an official District site.

- a. District social media network accounts shall be created under an official District e-mail account. Account password(s) and related account information shall be provided in writing and retained by the Public Affairs and IT Departments.
- b. Social media sites shall contain visible elements that identify them as an official District site. These elements include but are not limited to displaying the District logo, contact information, and a link to District website, whenever possible.

- c. District social media sites shall display or link to the District Social Media Policy.

VIII. SITE CONTENT AND COMMENT POLICY

- a. As a public agency, the District must abide by certain standards to serve all of its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.
- b. The intended purpose behind establishing District social media sites is to disseminate District information to the public.
- c. Sites that allow public comment shall inform visitors of the intended purpose of the site and that inappropriate posts are subject to removal, including but not limited to the following types of postings regardless of format (text, video, images, links, documents, etc.):
 - i. Comments not topically related;
 - ii. Profane language or content;
 - iii. Content that, for a reasonable person, promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination or a hostile attitude or gives offense on the basis of race, color, citizenship, age, religion, ancestry, gender, marital status, national origin, veteran's status, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - iv. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - v. Solicitations of commerce;
 - vi. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - vii. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - viii. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party; or
 - ix. Messages or information which in conflict with applicable law or District policies, rules or procedures.
- d. A comment posted by a member of the public on any District social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only. The District's publication of such a comment does not imply its endorsement of, or agreement with, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the District's opinions or policies.
- e. MWDOC reserves the right to deny access to District social media sites to any individual who violates the District's Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
- f. Departments shall monitor their social media sites for comments requesting responses from the District and for comments in violation of this Policy.

- g. When a MWDOC employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a MWDOC employee, the employee's name and title must be made available, and the employees shall not share personal information about themselves or other MWDOC employees.

IX. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

District use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format that tracks account information and preserves items that may be considered a record subject to disclosure under the California's Public Records Act or required to be retained pursuant to the Government Code.

- a. Departments are responsible for the creation, administration and deactivation of social media accounts, in coordination with the Public Affairs Department.
 - i. Account password information shall only be shared with authorized staff designated by the Department manager, or her/his designee, to fulfill the role of site account administrator.
 - ii. An account password shall promptly be reset when an employee is removed as an account administrator.
- b. Departments shall maintain a record of social media sites created for District use, which include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. A log file containing the name of the social media network, account id, password, registered e-mail address, date established, authorizing representative and name of person who created account and agreed to the site's terms of use agreement and/or policy.
 - ii. A record of the site's usage agreement at the time the site was created and any updated versions.
 - iii. A list of authorized site content authors and editors.
- c. Electronic information posted to a social media site by the District, or a member of the public, if permitted, may be considered a record subject to California's Public Records Act.
 - i. The Public Affairs Department shall be responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media.
 - ii. Site content shall be maintained in accordance with its respective records retention schedule and in accordance with District policies and procedures.