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SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT & GUIDELINES

Policy #: AP-3023

Origination Date: January 2021

Revised Date:

I. PURPOSE

- 1.01 To establish the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO) standards and operating procedures pertaining to the creation, maintenance, and use of METRO's social media websites.

II. APPLICATION

- 2.01 This policy applies to all social media websites that METRO maintains. The term "social media" refers to activities that integrate technology, social interaction and content creation through which users create or participate in online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos, blogs, podcasts, photo and video-sharing, and other web feeds).
- 2.02 METRO uses various forms of social media, including but not limited to, social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), image and video sharing sites (e.g., Instagram), and microblogging sites (e.g., Twitter).

III. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE POLICIES AND LAWS

- 3.01 All METRO social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and policies.
- 3.02 All of METRO's other existing policies that might apply to social media use remain in full force and effect.
- 3.03 METRO's social media sites shall also comply with METRO's conflict of interest rules and applicable ethics rules and policies.
- 3.04 Content on METRO's social media sites is likely subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to METRO business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, may be a public record. Wherever possible, such sites shall indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting, including comments, may be subject to public disclosure upon request.
- 3.05 METRO shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a METRO server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.



IV. POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.01 METRO recognizes that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on particular topics with the public using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and blogs. METRO may use social media when its use will further the business goals of the agency, support the mission of its departments, and enhance communications with members of the general public.
- 4.02 This policy applies to: (1) members of the general public posting content and engaging with METRO on social media platforms; and (2) staff authorized to use social media on behalf of the METRO, including employees, temporary employees, volunteers, paid and unpaid interns, consultants, vendors, and contractors, whether on or off duty, and whether on or off METRO property.
- 4.03 The METRO Board of Directors supports and authorizes the secure use of approved and established social media tools to deliver information to the public.

V. PROCEDURE

5.01 Social Media Website Management

The Marketing Director is responsible for the creation, administration, and deactivation of the METRO's social media accounts. Social media website accounts shall use an official METRO email account designated by the Marketing Department, if feasible. Social media websites shall provide a link to this policy, if feasible.

Whenever possible, METRO social media sites should link back to the official METRO website (www.scmttd.com) for forms, documents, online services, and other information necessary to conduct business with METRO.

5.02 Social Media Account Ownership

Any social media accounts created or used by employees or contractors on behalf of METRO or otherwise for any of METRO's business purposes belong solely to METRO, including any and all log-in information, passwords, and content associated with each account, including followers and contacts. METRO shall at all times retain sole ownership of all such accounts, including all log-in information, passwords, and associated content.



5.03 Social Media Website Content

The Marketing Department, via its Director, is responsible for establishing and maintaining content posted to the METRO's social media websites. METRO posts are the property of the METRO and may not be redistributed without crediting METRO. Comments or other content submitted by outside parties to METRO websites may not be redistributed without crediting the author. Outside parties should be contacted before their comments, photographs, or other content is redistributed.

5.04 Social Media Business Use Guidelines

For Marketing persons whose job responsibilities including posting to METRO's social media platforms and/or responding to the public inquiries via social media, the following guidelines shall be followed:

- 5.04.1 Employees engaging in METRO social media platforms in their official capacity must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of METRO and in accordance with all METRO policies.
- 5.04.2 Employees will refrain from disclosing non-public information, such as financial disclosure information, METRO personnel/employee information, legal information, or confidential information related to METRO.
- 5.04.3 Employees will not cite or refer to our customers, vendors, or business associates, identify them by name, or reveal any confidential information related to them without getting their explicit written permission in advance.
- 5.04.4 Employees will avoid endorsing or appearing to endorse any commercial products, services, entities, political parties, candidate or groups, or private interests.
- 5.04.5 Employees will refrain from posting any visual or audiovisual media that is vulgar, abusive, or offensive.
- 5.04.6 Employees will strive to be accurate in the social media communications about METRO. METRO encourages professionalism and honesty in social media and all other communications.
- 5.04.7 All persons who post content about METRO while interacting on social media in an individual and/or personal capacity shall state the opinion(s) expressed are their own and do not represent METRO positions, policies, views and/or opinions.



5.05 Content That May Be Removed From Social Media

For social media sites that allow comments, METRO prohibits content that is unrelated to the topic of the site. In addition, content (including articles, posts or comments) posted on METRO's social media sites by external and/or internal authorized users containing any of the following forms of content is prohibited and subject to removal by METRO:

- 5.05.a Information that may compromise public safety, public security or efficiency of METRO operations;
- 5.05.b Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- 5.05.c Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- 5.05.d Profane language or content;
- 5.05.e Threatening, violent, hateful, or malicious statements concerning individuals, METRO operators, or METRO administrative employees;
- 5.05.f Content that is false, factually inaccurate, or materially misleading;
- 5.05.g Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, such as trademark or copyright infringement;
- 5.05.h Content that violates a social media platform's policies or terms of use, as may be updated;
- 5.05.i Comments or content not germane to METRO or public transportation generally;
- 5.05.j Solicitations of commerce, such as product advertisements or personal marketing materials;
- 5.05.k Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, uniformed service member status, marital status, pregnancy, age, medical condition, physical or mental disability (whether perceived or actual), and genetic information;
- 5.05.l Content that defames or threatens to defame METRO, any third party, any individual or any group of individuals;
- 5.05.m Uploading or attaching files that contain viruses, corrupted files, or any other similar software or programs that may damage the operation of METRO or another's computer;
- 5.05.n Unauthorized disclosure of confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information.



METRO reserves the right to deny access (e.g. “block”) any individual who violates the METRO Social Media Guidelines, at any time and without prior notice. METRO will display on its social media sites what content is prohibited under this policy. It shall also display that METRO will remove any prohibited content pursuant to this policy.

VI. POLICY LIFESPAN AND REVIEW

This policy, once approved by the METRO Board of Directors, will remain in force until amended or removed by the METRO Board of Directors.

The CEO, Human Resources Director, and IT Director will review this policy bi-annually and provide to the METRO Board of Directors a statement of policy legitimacy or request for amendments.

VII. STANDARD GUIDELINE

Attached as Exhibit A to this policy is a standard guideline that staff should tailor to any METRO social media site and post on the same, when feasible.

VIII. ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY

8.01 Each Department Manager is responsible for administering this policy and the procedures within their department in accordance with this policy.

8.02 METRO will integrate this policy and procedures into the agency’s policies and procedures.

IX. REVISION HISTORY

Date	Action	Approved By
January 2021	NEW Policy	Alex Clifford/Danielle Glagola

END OF POLICY



EXHIBIT A

STANDARD GUIDELINES FOR POSTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

On any METRO social media site, the following should be posted, when feasible:

“This is an official [Facebook, Twitter, YouTube] page of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO). For more information about METRO, please visit www.scmtd.com. This site is intended to serve as a mechanism for communication between the public and METRO about the [describe topics] and as a forum to further METRO’s mission. Any comment submitted to this page and its list of fans may be considered a public record, which is subject to disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. [INSERT LINK TO POLICY, IF FEASIBLE]

For Facebook or any site that allows comments, the page shall also include a Comment Policy Box with the following disclaimer:

“Comments posted to this page will be monitored and inappropriate content will be removed. Under METRO’s Social Media Guidelines, METRO will remove any prohibited content, including: (1) information that may compromise public safety, public security or efficient METRO operations; (2) conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; (3) sexual content or links to sexual content; (4) profane language or content; (5) threatening, violent, hateful, or malicious statements concerning individuals, METRO operators, or METRO administrative employees; (6) content that is false, factually inaccurate, or materially misleading; (7) content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, such as trademark or copyright infringement; (8) content that violates a social media platform’s policies or terms of use, as may be updated; (9) comments or content not germane to METRO or public transportation generally; (10) solicitations of commerce, such as product advertisements or personal marketing materials; (11) content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, uniformed service member status, marital status, pregnancy, age, medical condition, physical or mental disability (whether perceived or actual), and genetic information; (12) content that defames or threatens to defame METRO, any third party, any individual or any group of individuals; (13) uploading or attaching files that contain viruses, corrupted files, or any other similar software or programs that may damage the operation of METRO or another's computer; and (14) unauthorized disclosure of confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information.

METRO, however, disclaims any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that are prohibited under METRO's Social Media Guidelines, which cannot be removed in an expeditious and otherwise timely manner. METRO does not necessarily endorse, and is not responsible for, any content that has been submitted by any other party. [INSERT LINK TO POLICY, IF FEASIBLE]