

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Social Media Policy

Policy Number: 102.03

Effective Date: 7/28/2020

Page Number: 1 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Executive Division (The
Office of Public Affairs)

Access Listing:
Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Georgia Department of Corrections' (GDC) standards for the use and the management of social media and to provide guidance on its administration and oversight. GDC uses a number of public social media platforms to improve communication with members of the public, employees, media representatives, and other stakeholders. This policy provides the department's standard on the official management and use of social media for departmental purposes.

Area of focus: Official GDC usage of social media platforms.

II. Authority:

- A. GDC Board Rule 125-1-2-.01(b); and
- B. O.C.G.A. §§ 50-18-70, *et seq.*

III. Definitions:

- A. **Social Network/Media Sites** - Web-based services that allow individuals to create public profiles, share information and socialize with others using a range of communications technologies. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), microblogging sites (Twitter, Nixle), photo- and video-sharing sites (Flickr, Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube), wikis (Wikipedia), blogs, and news sites (Digg, Reddit). The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.
- B. **Inappropriate Comments** - May include topics such as advertisements or endorsements for services or products, abusive or profane language, hate speech, personal attacks, harassment or threats of violence, libelous or slanderous statements against GDC or its employees, or statements that threaten the security of GDC.
- C. **Post** - Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.

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- D. **Social Media Account** - An established profile using a social media platform for the purpose of social media use.
- E. **Social Media Page** - The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- F. **Speech** - Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

- A. GDC Official Social Media Account:
 - 1. The Public Affairs Office (PAO) oversees the:
 - a. Management, maintenance and administration of all Social Media Sites and pages utilized for official Departmental use;
 - b. Approval for any modifications to or expansions of the Social Media Sites and pages utilized for official Departmental use;
 - c. Monitoring of comments posted on Social Media Sites and pages utilized for official Departmental use; and
 - d. Maintenance of social media usernames and passwords for all sites owned/operated by GDC.
 - 2. Social Media Pages utilized for official Departmental use shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by GDC and shall have GDC contact information prominently displayed or hyperlinked.

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3. Content on official GDC Social Media Pages is subject to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all information technology and records management policies:
 - a. Content is subject to public records laws and records retention schedules; and
 - b. Content must be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with open records law, e-discovery laws, and GDC policies.
4. Individual facilities, centers, or offices shall not be permitted to establish or maintain a Social Media Page, unless approved by PAO.
5. GDC maintains official Social Media Pages to:
 - a. Provide a direct way to reach constituents and stakeholders;
 - b. Promote transparency in government;
 - c. Assist with community outreach and engagement;
 - d. Assist in making time-sensitive notifications; and
 - e. Provide an additional recruitment mechanism for GDC.
6. GDC's social media presence intends to create a safe space for open discussion and interaction with the GDC team. In order to foster an engaging environment, GDC reserves the right to restrict inappropriate comments that:
 - a. Are threatening, discriminatory, obscene, derogatory, profane or hateful;
 - b. Contain offensive terms that target protected classes;

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- c. Harm the reputation of any person or organization;
 - d. Suggest or encourage violent or illegal activity;
 - e. Advertisements or solicitations of any kind;
 - f. Contain information that reasonably could compromise the safety and security of individuals, GDC facilities, or public safety;
 - g. Off-topic posts or repetitive posts that are copied and pasted or automated;
or
 - h. Personal information including, but not limited to, identification numbers, phone numbers and emails.
7. GDC reserves the right to ban or block repeat offenders from interacting with our social media accounts and pages, as the platforms allow.
8. GDC does not promote commercial endorsements. Likes, links, and follows do not suggest that we are promoting or in agreement with third-party content.
9. GDC social media sites are subject to the Georgia Open Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format related to GDC business, including communications posted by GDC and communications received from citizens, is a public record.

V. **Attachments:** None.

VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:**

Upon completion, all documentation pursuant to this policy, including saved documentation of our Social Network/Media Sites, shall be retained for at least three (3) years.