

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY – COOSA COUNTY, ALABAMA

This policy is a guideline for the establishment and use of the Coosa County Commission owned/funded social media sites as a means of conveying Coosa County information to its citizens.

The intended purpose behind establishing Coosa County social media sites is to disseminate information from the county, about the county to its citizens.

The Coosa County Commission has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the county, especially on county owned/funded social media sites. The Coosa County Commission allows Department Heads to establish and operate social media policies for their respective departments with the understanding the sites must comply with the Coosa County Social Media Policy. The Coosa County Commission acknowledges the right of Elected Officials to create, or have created, social media outlets to be exclusively maintained by the Elected Officials, and strongly encourages those Elected Officials to adhere to the guidelines established by the Coosa County Commission and to further establish social media policy for their employees who may update or respond to the citizenry via social media.

For purposes of the policy, “social media” is understood to be content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, blogs, RSS, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Flickr. For the purposes of this policy, “comments” include information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted on a Coosa County social media site.

General Policy

1. The establishment and use by any County department on County social media sites are subject to approval by the Coosa County Commission. All Coosa County social media sites shall be administered by the applicable department head.
2. Coosa County media sites should make clear that they are maintained by applicable department head, and that they follow the Coosa County Social Media Policy.
3. Wherever possible, county social media sites should link back to the official Coosa County website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the County of Coosa.
4. The Commission staff will occasionally monitor content on all county funded sites and on all affiliated social media sites to ensure adherence to both the County Social Media Policy and the interest and goals of Coosa County.
5. The Commission reserves the right to request the removal of any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law. The removal of such content must be retained by the department head for a reasonable period of time, including the time, date, and identity of the poster, when available.
6. These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
7. The County will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible.
8. Coosa County’s website at <http://www.coosacountyal.com> will remain the County’s primary and predominant internet presence.
9. All County social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulation and policies.

10. County Social Media sites are subject the Alabama Public Records Law. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to County business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.
11. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of Coosa County may be removed.
12. Employees representing the County government via County social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the County and in accordance with all County policies.
13. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

Comment Policy

1. As a public entity, the County must abide by certain standards to serve all of its citizens in a civil and unbiased manner.
2. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on any Coosa County social media sites and are subject to request for removal and/or restriction by the Coosa County Commission or designees:
 - a. Comments not related to the original topic, including ransom or unintelligible comments;
 - b. Profane, obscene, violent or pornographic content and/or language;
 - c. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color age, religion, gender or national origin;
 - d. Defamatory or personal attacks;
 - e. Threats to any person or organization;
 - f. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any political campaigns or ballot measures;
 - g. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
 - h. Conduct in violation of any federal state or local law;
 - i. Encouragement of illegal activity;
 - j. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - k. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright, of any party.
3. A comment posted by a member of the public on any Coosa County social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by Coosa County nor does such comments necessarily reflect the opinion or policies of the County of Coosa.
4. The County of Coosa reserves the right to deny access to the Coosa County social media sites for any individual who violates the Coosa County's Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
5. Departments shall monitor their social media sites for comments requesting responses from the County and for comments in violation of this policy
6. When a Coosa County employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a Coosa County employee, the employee's name and title should be made available and the employee shall not share personal information about himself or herself or other county employees.

7. All comments posted to any Coosa County Facebook sites are bound by Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities located at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>, and the County of Coosa reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities to Facebooks with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive actions.