

# IDAHO STATE POLICE PROCEDURE

## 02.17 AGENCY OUTREACH USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

### A. General

Idaho State Police (ISP) recognizes the valuable role social media can play in creating and building connections between ISP employees and the communities they serve. The purpose of the ISP use of social media is to effectively and immediately convey important public safety information and matters of public interest concerning the agency's programs and activities in our efforts to further our mission; to serve and protect the lives, property, and constitutional rights of the people of Idaho.

1. This procedure establishes the agency's position on the utility and management of social media and provides guidance on its administration and oversight. This procedure is general, recognizing the agency may choose to use new tools as they emerge and meet the needs of the agency.
2. This procedure does not apply to agency members using social media, the internet, or websites for legitimate investigative purposes.
3. ISP may use social media as an effective means of informing the public about traffic safety, incidents affecting safe travel including crashes and road conditions, crime prevention, agency services, and to assist the agency in meeting community outreach objectives including problem-solving, investigative updates and assistance, and how ISP employees are making a positive difference in their communities. This procedure identifies potential uses that may be explored or expanded upon as deemed reasonable by administrative and supervisory personnel.

### B. Definitions

“Authors/Users/Administrators” means those full-time ISP employees designated to author and communicate on behalf of the ISP via social networking. Social media authors will be designated by the Director, District Captains, or Program Managers and will be the only personnel authorized to post any information to any social media account on behalf of the agency.

“Comments” means responses, replies, observations or opinions made via a social media site to a post or other content, usually made by outside third parties.

“Content” means any item posted such as, but not limited to, written work, photos, videos, etc.

“Page”, “Site”, “Account” means the specific portion of a social media web site where content is displayed and managed by an individual(s) with administrator rights.

“Posts” means content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content.

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“Public Affairs Office” means the office within the ISP Director’s Office led and managed by the [ISP Communications Director](#) and staffed by ISP employees as assigned.

“Social Media” (SM) means the internet-based communications tools that integrate user-generated content and user participation, and which focus on immediacy, interactivity and information sharing in multiple ways. SM includes, but is not limited to, blogs, micro blogging sites (Twitter), video/photo posting sites (Flickr, YouTube), social networks (FaceBook, MySpace), news sites (Digg, Reddit), forums, and online support chat sites.

“Social Networking” means the activity of creating personal and business relationships with other people especially by sharing information, personal messages, etc., on the internet.

“World Wide Web” or “Web” means a part of the internet accessed through a graphical user interface and containing documents often connected by hyperlinks.

## C. Agency-Sanctioned Presence

### 1. Determine strategy

- a. The agency shall develop a posting strategy specific to each social media platform where the agency chooses to share content. Posting strategy will include guidelines on appropriate content. Each social media page shall be designed and managed for the platform strategy and target audience. Any content that does not strictly conform to the content guidelines must be approved by the Public Affairs Office prior to posting.
- b. Where possible, each social media page shall include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and scope of the agency’s presence on the website.
- c. Each page will link to the agency’s official website; [isp.idaho.gov](http://isp.idaho.gov), and account contact information in case of emergency will be listed in the profile notes as appropriate for the platform. Any exceptions must be approved by Public Affairs Office.
- d. To maximize public outreach through social media, and for the most efficient use of agency resources, the following social media is approved to use. Any exceptions must be approved by the Public Affairs Office:
  - 1) one Facebook page for the agency maintained by the Public Affairs Office;
  - 2) one Instagram account for the agency maintained by the Public Affairs Office;
  - 3) Twitter accounts for each District, one designated Headquarters Twitter account, approved accounts for ISP divisions or programs, and for those individuals approved to participate in ISP’s Tweeting Trooper Program;

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- 4) one You Tube page for the agency maintained by the Public Affairs Office;
- 5) One LinkedIn account for the agency maintained by the Public Affairs Office.

### 2. Procedures

- a. All agency social media sites or pages shall be approved by the Director or the Public Affairs Office;
- b. Only employees authorized by the Director, District Captains, Program Managers or the Public Affairs Office will administer and author social media pages and post content;
- c. Log in and Passwords:
  - 1) each official social media account must have a primary account administrator who is responsible for account passwords;
  - 2) the Public Affairs Office will maintain a current and accurate list of log in information including passwords to all authorized agency social media accounts;
  - 3) any changes to log in information and passwords made by account administrators must be immediately reported to the Public Affairs Office;
  - 4) when an employee with access to agency social media sites is, for any reason, no longer authorized for access, the Public Affairs Office or designated account administrator will immediately change passwords to affected sites.
- d. All agency employees are encouraged to contribute content that reflects positive, proactive community outreach to official agency social media sites. Suggested content for agency social media by members who are not authorized to post should be approved through the member's chain of command and provided to the Public Affairs Office, who has the authority to edit contributions;
- e. All agency social media pages shall, for public transparency, clearly indicate they are official ISP accounts and shall have agency contact information prominently displayed as appropriate for the platform.
- f. Social media content shall adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and agency policies and procedures, including all public information, media release, use of agency equipment and technology, and records management policies.
  - 1) content is subject to Idaho public records laws; relevant records retention schedules apply to social media content.
  - 2) content must be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with open records laws and e-discovery laws and policies.
  - 3) content on all authorized agency accounts will be monitored by the Public Affairs Office.
- g. Where possible, social media pages will display or link to the approved agency social media Terms of Use. The Terms of Use state:
  - 1) the opinions expressed by visitors to the page(s) do not reflect the opinions of the agency;

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- 2) posted comments will be monitored and that the agency reserves the right to remove obscenities, off-topic comments, personal attacks, and other comments that violate the Rules for Commenting;
  - 3) that any content posted is subject to public disclosure;
  - 4) other approved Terms complying with limited public forums.
  - 5) account administrators will not block or delete comments or followers without first reporting and reviewing any violations of the Terms of Use with the Public Affairs Office.
- h. The agency and the public have an interest in keeping official agency social media accounts updated and relevant. Social media accounts that have not been updated in two (2) months will be assessed by the Public Affairs Office and District Captain or Program Manager to determine if they should be archived and deleted.
3. Agency-Sanctioned Use
- a. All content posted on authorized social media sites is official government communication.
  - b. Those authorized to manage and administer official agency social media sites are reminded that for their safety and the effective operation of the ISP, in accepting authorization to administer official agency social media accounts, they agree to take full responsibility for their understanding and adherence to relevant policy and procedure and must attend mandatory annual training that, at a minimum, addresses legal issues concerning the appropriate use of social media sites, as well as privacy, civil rights, dissemination and retention of information posted on agency sites, appropriate and inappropriate content, and ISP procedures [02.05 Media Releases](#) and 02.23 Employee Use of Social Media. Such training will be provided by the ISP Public Affairs Office.
  - c. Personnel approved to administer officially sanctioned social media sites understand they speak on behalf of the agency and will:
    - 1) always conduct themselves as representatives of the agency and accordingly, shall adhere to all agency standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum, and follow other related agency procedures;
    - 2) identify themselves as a member of the agency;
    - 3) use only agency issued devices to post to official agency social media sites. Agency personnel use of personally owned devices to manage the agency's social media activities is prohibited;
    - 4) follow ISP procedure [02.05 Media Release](#) when releasing public information regarding a criminal investigation and traffic incidents.
    - 5) Observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions in posting materials to electronic media.

### D. Content

1. Appropriate social media content is information that is publicly available, including:

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- a. agency releases and announcements;
  - b. real-time in-progress crime or traffic incident information that relates to public safety. Initial release of in-progress crime or traffic incidents will first come from dedicated District or Headquarters accounts. Other authorized accounts may then share the information;
  - c. crime prevention, traffic safety, road condition information;
  - d. investigative requests for tips, wanted persons as requested by the primary investigating officer;
  - e. information on missing or endangered persons;
  - f. personnel recruitment;
  - g. agency history and traditions;
  - h. supporting partner posts;
  - i. employee accomplishments;
  - j. invitations to participate in community events that support the mission of the ISP.
2. Inappropriate content is any content that:
- a. jeopardizes officer safety;
  - b. compromises any ongoing criminal investigation or police operation;
  - c. compromises the safety, security, privacy or individual rights of victims, witness, and suspects;
  - d. compromises public safety;
  - e. reveals personal information about an officer or an officer's family without express permission;
  - f. is abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory or sexual in nature;
  - g. disparages a group or individual;
  - h. is commercial advertising. This does not include mention or images of private businesses who show support for local law enforcement or partner with local law enforcement through a community benefit program or community service event or campaign;
  - i. is for personal use or conducts private business;
  - j. relates to a political party, campaign or initiative;
  - k. reveals "inside information" or relates to internal communications considered not public, such as internal, sensitive, proprietary, or classified information;
  - l. could compromise the reputation or damage the effective performance of the mission or operation of the ISP or its employees.
3. Public posts directly to agency pages are not authorized including text, photos, video, etc. Any suggestions from members of the public for content on authorized official agency social media sites must be approved and posted by the Public Affairs Office or other authorized administrators.
4. Violations of policies and procedures may result in revoking the employee's authorized access and/or other discipline.

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5. Any social media account administered by the agency employee that may reasonably be viewed as being an official agency account that has not been approved via the official approval process may be terminated.

### E. Retention of Records

1. Agency posts are official government communications governed by ISP Procedure [02.07 Records Management](#) and subject to the provisions of the [Idaho Public Records Act](#).

### F. Comparable Information

Social media accounts should not be considered the sole venue for conducting official agency business or releasing public information. People should be able to obtain comparable information and services through the agency's official website or other official means. For example, members of the public should be able to learn about the agency's activities and to communicate with the agency without having to join a third-party social media website. As such, web-published press releases will be considered for newsworthy incidents. In addition, if the agency uses a third-party service to solicit feedback, the agency will provide an alternative government email address where users can also send feedback.

### G. Agency Twitter Program

As stated in [Section C.1.d.3](#)), the agency's Twitter program is decentralized. The ISP Public Affairs Office manages the agency's Twitter program and monitors all trooper, individual and program accounts to ensure that all posted content is in line with agency objectives and expectations.

As with other social media accounts, passwords and usernames must be registered with the Public Affairs Office and relevant Captains or Program Managers. For uniformity, user and display names are coordinated through the Public Affairs Office. Account administrators must notify the Public Affairs Office if they change their passwords. For employee safety and the effective operation of the ISP, requirements and training for those participating in the agency Twitter program may be updated from time to time.

1. Eligibility:
  - a. account administrators must undergo training given by the ISP Public Affairs Office;
  - b. new administrators must undergo a two-week trial period where they tweet in private mode. Upon approval from the Public Affairs Office, their account can then go live;
  - c. account administrators must have the approval of their District Captain or Program Manager to participate in the Tweeting Trooper agency Twitter program.
2. Twitter Profile Requirements:

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- a. for individual accounts, the profile picture must be the individual's official agency portrait. For commissioned personnel, the portrait will show the trooper in uniform. Agency accounts will use the ISP logo as the profile image. Exceptions must be approved by the Public Affairs Office;
  - b. profile bio must clearly indicate that the account is an official account and the trooper is a commissioned member of the ISP. Language for the profile bio will be provided by the Public Affairs Office;
  - c. profile must link to ISP website home page unless otherwise approved;
  - d. profile account must be archived via ISP's ArchiveSocial account (instructions will be provided).
3. Likes can be perceived as endorsements and views expressed will be considered those of the agency. Troopers should be conscientious when choosing which profiles and accounts to follow on Twitter, keeping in mind that any accounts that he or she follows will reflect upon the agency.