

# Board of Lucas County Commissioners



**TITLE:** Social Media Policy

**POLICY NUMBER:** 38a

**RESOLUTION NUMBER:** 2025-186

**SUPERSEDES POLICY:** 38

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 12, 2025

**PAGE:** 1 of 6

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## I. SCOPE

This policy applies to all departments and employees under the appointing authority and jurisdiction of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners, subject, where applicable, to collective bargaining agreements.

## II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for and responsibilities regarding the authorized use of social media by Board of Lucas County Commissioners departments. These standards ensure that staff using social media tools are compliant with existing policies and legal requirements.

The Board of Lucas County Commissioners has a business need to augment traditional communication methods with the use of social media. This policy applies to all Board-sponsored use of social media and to all Board employees and approved volunteers, consultants, service providers, and contractors performing business on behalf of a department using social media for work-related purposes.

This policy also includes guidelines for personal use of social media by employees.

## III. POLICY

“Social media” includes all forms of online communication and interaction that enable users to create, share, exchange, or view content, including but not limited to, text, photographs, audio, video, and multimedia files. This includes but is not limited to platforms such as Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, blogs, wikis, and any other online forums, communities, or networks intended for user-generated content, social interaction, or networking.

The Board of Lucas County Commissioners supports the use of social media to further the goals of the Board and the missions of its departments where appropriate. Use of social media must not compromise data confidentiality and integrity.

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## IV. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Department use of social media shall conform to the guidelines, responsibilities, and procedures contained or referenced in this policy.

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- 1) Each official department presence on social media is considered an extension of the County's information networks and is governed by County policies, including e-mail, Internet usage, and related computer policies.
- 2) Department Directors, or their designees, will review, approve, and monitor all use of social media for their department. Official use by the department of social media services is ultimately the responsibility of the Department Director. Only authorized agents are permitted to conduct official department business using social media.
- 3) Should a department want to create a new profile, page, or account on a social media platform, the Director or their designee must obtain permission from the Communications Director.
- 4) All accounts should be viewable to the public and should not use privacy settings to prevent public access to account content.
- 5) Each Director will ensure that the department's designee(s) routinely monitor content on each social media platform to ensure adherence to this policy and to ensure that messaging and branding is consistent with the goals of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners.
- 6) Employees who publish to social media in the scope of their work for their department are acting as representatives of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners via social media and must conduct themselves at all times in accordance with Board policies, including the Code of Ethical Conduct Policy, Harassment-Free Work Environment Policy, Public Records Policy, Anti-Discrimination Policy, and Non-Retaliation Policy.

Employees who fail to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner shall be subject to disciplinary action.

- 7) Departments must keep, in a secure means, an updated list of all user names and passwords associated with the department's social media accounts. It is important for the department to have access to each account at any time in case the individuals who normally maintain each account are unavailable.

The department's designated users are required to update the login information when necessary.

- 8) Departments should never "follow," "like," or link to political campaign sites. While departments may "follow" or "like" the official social media accounts of elected officials, departments should exercise caution to avoid the appearance of endorsing a candidate or specific elected official and should not follow such officials' personal social media accounts not used for County business.

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Departments may retweet, follow, like, share, or comment on posts by elected officials unless doing so would appear to endorse a political candidate or campaign. Departments should also not use social media to take positions regarding political issues that are pending before the Board of Lucas County Commissioners and should avoid “following” or “liking” partisan sites that take positions on candidates or campaigns.

The department should consult with the County Administrator or Communications Director with questions about any of these issues.

- 9) Departments that use social media are responsible for complying with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies. This includes adherence to established law and policies regarding copyright, public records, records retention, privacy, and information security policies established by the Board of Lucas County Commissioners.
- 10) If a department plans to collect contact information through social media, it must do so by allowing members of the public to opt-in rather than requiring them to opt-out of such collection. The department must also permit subscribers to remove themselves from the list at any time by contacting a listed representative of the department.
- 11) The department must avoid using the intellectual property of other individuals or organizations unless expressly authorized by the owner to use the protected intellectual property.

#### Content Moderation

Before removing, hiding or otherwise deleting any content posted to any official social media platform of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners or its departments, you must consult with the Communications Director.

The following are examples of content that may be subject to removal:

- Profane language or content.
- Explicit sexual or harassing content, including links to such content.
- Violent or threatening content.
- Solicitation of commerce, commercial activities, fund-raising, or sponsorship.
- Illegal activity.
- Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of another party, such as trademark or copyright infringement.
- Political activities by employees while working in an official capacity.

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- Posts by employees that violate Board of Lucas County Commissioners or departmental policies and procedures.
- Personal information about employees.
- Making or publishing of false or defamatory statements concerning any individual or organization.

A copy of every removed, hidden or otherwise deleted item must be retained. Each department must keep a spreadsheet that tracks any removed, hidden or otherwise deleted social media content. Spreadsheet entries will include the date of the posted content, the name of the individual or account that posted, the date the posted content was hidden, removed or otherwise deleted, the name of the employee who hid, removed or deleted the post, and confirmation that the Communications Director was notified in writing of the posted content being hidden, removed or otherwise deleted.

The following language can be used to warn individuals about their content:

*“Your recent post is in violation of Board of Lucas County Commissioners’ Social Media Policy. The Board reserves the right to remove, hide, or block such content. Please refrain from posting inappropriate content in the future. Thank you for your understanding.”*

Removing or blocking an individual from future posting on departmental Social Media pages is not recommended.

#### Records Retention

Department use of social media shall be documented and maintained in an easily accessible format that tracks account information, even though the social media platform itself may meet the requirements of retention. To the extent that the social media platform only keeps information for a limited period, the department should consult with the department’s record retention schedule or the County Prosecutor’s Office regarding whether and how copies should be kept. In general, the following guidelines should be followed:

- 1) All content should be fully accessible to any person requesting documents from the platform.
- 2) No records should be hidden, removed or deleted without cause. Such hiding, removal or deletion must be done in consultation with the Communications Director. A copy of the removed material must be retained and tracked in a spreadsheet.
- 3) Responsibility is left to each department to retain records according to their records retention schedule.

#### Social Media Security

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Departments should take steps to ensure that their use of social media is as secure as is possible in order to avoid unauthorized access to any social media accounts. The following strategies can minimize the risk of misuse of the account:

- Establish strong passwords for social media sites (See the Lucas County Information Services (LCIS) [Password Management Policy](#) for more information on password security) and use multi-factor authentication (MFA) whenever possible.
- Never leave workstations unattended or unlocked when logged on to a social media account.
- Only department Directors, or their designee(s), should know the login and password to social media accounts. At least two people must have access to login credentials.
- If a department designee changes, the login and password should also be changed.

Even with these measures, sites are not immune from attacks. In the event a social media account is compromised, the department should immediately:

- Contact the LCIS Help Desk.
- If possible, change the login and password information.
- Report the incident to the County Administrator and Communications Director.
- Acknowledge the security breach to social media followers in consultation with the Communications Director.
- Look for signs of damage and make necessary corrections.
- Report the incident to Risk Management if there is any indication that employee information is compromised or if financial loss is implicated.

For further information and guidance please refer to:

- Ohio Revised Code Sections [121.22](#), [149.011](#), [149.43](#)
- [Electronic Mail and Internet Use Policy \(Policy 22b\)](#)
- [LCIS Password Management Policy](#)

## **V. GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY EMPLOYEES**

Lucas County employees may have personal social media accounts and participate in social media. However, postings to social media should be done in a manner sensitive to the employee's professional responsibilities.

Employees are advised to post on social media only what they would want the world to see. Once something is posted on social media, it is available to be viewed by others even after it is removed; it is public and permanent.

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- 1) Employees' personal social media accounts and activity must be separate from employees' professional accounts and must not be attributable to the department or employee's job function at the County. Employees must not speak for or represent the County on social media unless expressly authorized to do so by the Communications Director or their designee.
- 2) Personal use of social media during work hours is prohibited. Personal use of social media is permitted during approved meal and break periods.
- 3) Personal use of social media on County equipment is prohibited.
- 4) Employees must not use their work email address to register a social media profile that is for personal use.
- 5) Employees must conduct themselves in a manner that does not negatively impact the County's ability to perform its operational duties or erode public trust in the County.
- 6) Employees must adhere to all Board policies, including the Code of Ethical Conduct Policy, Harassment-Free Work Environment Policy, Anti-Discrimination Policy, and Non-Retaliation Policy.
- 7) Employees must not post or share any confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information related to County business, including information related to personnel matters or ongoing investigations.
- 8) Employees must not use commentary that can be reasonably interpreted to be defamatory, obscene, libelous, or slanderous.

DocuSigned by:

John Borell

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Signature of County Prosecutor

3/14/2025

Date

DocuSigned by:

John M. Zoll

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Signature of County Administrator

3/16/2025

Date

Revision History: Policy #38, Resolution 11-718, Passed August 23, 2011