

## Proposed Revisions : Policy 9.19 Social Media

### A. Applicability - this policy applies to:

	Yes		Yes		Yes
County Manager, Tax Collector, Tax Assessor, County Attorney, Clerk to the Board	✓	FT/PT Benefited Probationary	✓	Employees of Sheriff's Office	✓
Directors of Health, Social Services, Elections, and Soil and Water	✓	FT/PT Benefited Non-Probationary	✓	Employees of Register of Deeds Office	✓
Sheriff and Register of Deeds	✓	PT, Seasonal, Temporary, Interns, Volunteers	✓	Employees of Board of Elections Office	✓

### B. Roles and Responsibilities

1. Rowan County Information Technology (IT) is responsible for managing the official County social media accounts.
2. Departments are responsible for creating and moderating their own social media accounts. A social media moderator (moderator) is defined as any employee or agent of a Rowan County department who is assigned to post, share, or monitor content through the department's social media account(s).
3. To open a departmental social media account, the designated moderator must complete the Social Media Account Request Form, which states that the moderator will abide by the rules and guidelines stated in this policy.

### C. Acceptable Use

All use of social media networking sites by County employees and persons communicating as an agent of Rowan County will comply with applicable State, federal and local laws, regulations and County policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, North Carolina's public records law, First Amendment, privacy laws, and Rowan County acceptable use and information sensitivity and security policies. All social media is governed by these policies laws and policies, as well as the policies outlined in this document.

### D. Rowan County Branding

Social media account profiles will identify the account as representing Rowan County and will make clear which agency or department the account supports. Account profiles may use the County logo or department branding image as the profile image. The profile image will properly represent the department and be easily recognizable.

### E. Public Rules and Disclaimer

All Rowan County social media accounts must provide a link to our Public Rules & Disclaimer which states:

1. Representatives of Rowan County Government communicate via this site. Consequently, any communication via this site (whether by a government employee or the general public) is subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be subject to monitoring and disclosure to third parties.
2. We value your comments and questions and encourage you to utilize our online Feedback Form through the County's website. Feedback that includes citizen complaints or comments must be maintained based on the General Records

Retention and Disposal Schedule; Standard 1, Item 17 specifies a one-year retention schedule for records of this nature.

3. This page is not intending to create a public forum and Rowan County reserves the right to remove comments entirely if they violate our decency policies or are outside of the topics or information provided within this page. We will not remove or censor comments because they are critical of a department, county officials, or any other aspect of county government or because a moderator personally disagrees with them. However, moderators are allowed to delete inappropriate comments if they are vulgar, threatening, libelous, or harassing. Further, Rowan County also reserves the right to delete comments that contain the following:
  - a) Spam, advertising or links to other sites
  - b) The promotion of any illegal activity
  - c) Promotions for any particular services, products, or political organizations
  - d) Copyrighted or trademarked material
  - e) Personally identifiable information such as an address, phone number, social security number, or other sensitive information.

F. Public Records: Public Comments and Record Retention

1. Like email, communication via government-related social networking sites is a public record. This means that both the posts of the employee administrator and any feedback by other employees or nonemployees, including the public, become part of the public record if they are posted on the county's social media page(s).
2. Moderators who receive messages through the private message service offered by some social media sites, including direct messages, should encourage users to contact the appropriate department or employee using a County-issued email address or website link. Any private messages received through a social media account should be treated the same as constituent emails and, therefore, as public records. As best practice, moderators or authorized staff members should reply using their county government email account whenever possible.
3. Information posted on any of the County's social media accounts, regardless of who posted it, may be considered a record of public information as defined under the North Carolina's public records law. There is not, neither should there be, any expectation of privacy with any social media postings on the County's site(s).
4. All employees are required to assume responsibility for public records and comply with the retention period under the NC General Statutes. Any department with a social media account should contact Rowan County Information Technology to set up a retention schedule and system.
5. It is especially important NOT to remove or censor comments because they are critical of a department, county officials, or any other aspect of county government or because a moderator personally disagrees with them. However, moderators are allowed to delete inappropriate comments if they are vulgar, threatening, libelous, or harassing. Further, Rowan County also reserves the right to delete comments that contain the following:
  - a) Spam, advertising or links to other sites
  - b) Contains personally identifiable information
  - c) The promotion of any illegal activity
  - d) Promotions for any particular services, products, or political organizations

**G. Official Rowan County Social Media Accounts**

Officially, Rowan County has two social media profiles, which are managed by the IT Department:

Twitter <http://twitter.com/rowancountync>

Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/RowanCountyNC>

*Approved 11-4-19*