

Social Media

1055.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the process for creating and approving social media accounts related to the Orange County Sheriff's Department, as well as to provide guidelines for branding, content, and administration of those accounts. This policy shall ensure a unified brand in the realm of social media that is consistent with the Orange County Sheriff's Department mission and purpose.

This policy is not intended to interfere with the rights of Members of the Orange County Sheriff's Department to form, join, and participate in the activities of recognized Member organizations of their own choosing for the purpose of representation on all matters of employee-employer relations or to refrain from such activities. It is also not intended to interfere with, restrain, or prevent Member communications regarding wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment.

For policy regarding personal social media accounts, refer to Policy 1058.

1055.2 MISSION

The Orange County Sheriff's Department seeks to create a dynamic virtual online community that embodies our core values: integrity without compromise, service above self, professionalism in the performance of duty, and vigilance in safeguarding the community. The Orange County Sheriff's Department welcomes positive engagement that seeks to inform and educate the public.

1055.3 AUTHORIZED AND UNAUTHORIZED SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

1055.3.1 PRIMARY ACCOUNTS

A primary social media account refers to any authorized account that posts on behalf of the entire Orange County Sheriff's Department. This is currently limited to accounts representing the entire Department. Primary accounts must be authorized by the Public Affairs Bureau. The Public Affairs Bureau will create the accounts to ensure branding alignment. The Public Affairs Bureau must be included as an administrator and provided with account passwords. The Public Affairs Bureau also reserves the right to determine whether or not a social media account qualifies as primary.

1055.3.2 SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

A secondary social media account refers to any authorized account that does not post on behalf of the entire Orange County Sheriff's Department. This includes any account that may represent groups, individuals, or canines within the OCSD community, but are not regularly administered by the Public Affairs Bureau. These accounts must adhere to the overall mission of the Department

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while providing a subgroup community to share content (e.g. Contract city police services of OCSD). Secondary accounts also must be authorized by the Public Affairs Bureau and follow the guidelines for secondary accounts in order to protect the integrity of the OCSD brand. The Public Affairs Bureau also reserves the right to determine whether or not a social media account qualifies as secondary. The Public Affairs Bureau will be the account administrator, will determine and approve additional OCSD Members as administrators, and will not be removed as an administrator. The Public Affairs Bureau will be provided with password information for all secondary accounts, and reserves the right to edit and delete posts, and/or terminate secondary accounts.

1055.3.3 UNAUTHORIZED ACCOUNTS

An unauthorized social media account refers to any account creating content related to OCSD which has not been authorized by the Public Affairs Bureau to post publicly on behalf of the Orange County Sheriff's Department. Such unauthorized accounts, may include, but do not have to include, actual misrepresentation of OCSD through branding, content, administration, etc. The existence of an unauthorized account may or may not be known to the Public Affairs Bureau (e.g. Retired OCSD personnel groups, supporters of OCSD, law enforcement watchdog groups, etc.). Anyone who discovers an unauthorized account is encouraged to alert the Public Affairs Bureau. The Public Affairs Bureau will work to determine what steps to be taken, if any.

Social media accounts created by recognized Member organizations are not considered unauthorized accounts.

1055.4 CREATING AND APPROVING ACCOUNTS

The Public Affairs Bureau will set up approved accounts to ensure branding alignment. Once an account is approved, the administrators must meet with the Public Affairs team for a training session. During the training session, the Public Affairs team will provide counseling regarding setting up the account, branding, creating a content calendar, photo guidelines, rules of engagement and more.

If a secondary account currently exists, the Department Member will contact the Public Affairs Bureau and provide them with the name of the account, a brief history of why it was started, when it was started, what it hopes to accomplish, and the names of administrators and passwords. The Public Affairs Bureau will review the account and decide if the account needs to be deleted or changed to adhere to this policy.

All accounts will be created and maintained with a Public Affairs Bureau approved email account. The Public Affairs Bureau will maintain a list of official primary and secondary accounts, as well as, recommended and approved social media platforms.

1055.5 BRANDING, CONTENT AND ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES

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1055.5.1 GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY ACCOUNTS

1. Branding: A primary account uses the Orange County Sheriff's Department name in the title and clearly defines itself as an official voice of the Department. Official logos are used to visually identify its connection to the Orange County Sheriff's Department brand (e.g. Primary Facebook account- Orange County Sheriff's Department).
2. Content: Content for primary accounts may only be posted by approved administrators.
3. Administration: A primary account is administrated by the Public Affairs Bureau or approved individuals.

1055.5.2 GUIDELINES FOR SECONDARY ACCOUNTS

1. Branding; An authorized secondary account must clearly define itself as a group, Member, canine, or community related to the Orange County Sheriff's Department, without intimating that it represents official views of the Department as a whole. Accounts created and associated with a specific Department Member with the intention of distributing department information on the department's behalf are considered secondary accounts. The OCSD badge/city seal must be used as the profile picture with approval from both the OCSD Public Affairs Bureau and the City Manager for Contract City accounts and official Department portraits will be used for Member accounts. Administrators of secondary accounts are allowed and encouraged to take advantage of official Department colors and fonts (e.g. Contract city Facebook account- OCSD Laguna Hills Police Services).
2. Content: Postings must adhere to the Department's high standards and be aligned with its mission. Members representing OCSD via authorized secondary accounts must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of OCSD and in accordance with all Departmental policies.
 - (a) Photos posted on social media sites shall be from the view of the public's vantage point and not from within the incident scene (e.g. crime scenes, traffic collision scenes, etc.).
 - (b) Photos of identifiable juveniles shall not be posted unless approved by the Public Affairs Bureau.
 - (c) Photos of identifiable arrestees, including booking photos, shall not be posted unless approved by the Public Affairs Bureau.
 - (d) Photos of identifiable residential addresses, license plates, or any other easily identifiable personal information shall not be posted unless approved by the Public Affairs Bureau.

1055.6 RESPONSE POLICY AND REMOVED CONTENT

Operators of primary and secondary accounts should respond in a timely manner to questions and comments from our social media followers, when appropriate. The tone should be positive, factual and in line with the Department's mission. However, Members should not answer questions if they do not know the answer and they must consult the Public Affairs Bureau whenever they receive a comment or question that appears inappropriate.

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The Orange County Sheriff's Department reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of the Department's social media comment policy. Listed below are guidelines for determining possible responses to comments:

1. **Assess and evaluate** - It is not necessary to respond to every comment, though the best practice involves erring on the side of open and two way communications. Is the person/account credible and is the post accurate? If it is an unhappy individual, do we have an opportunity to fix the situation?
2. **Monitor only** - We recommend simply monitoring posts involving "trolls" or sites dedicated to hostility. If it is determined that engaging can only cause more harm, do not engage.
3. **Correct errors** - If someone is misinformed, or otherwise posts erroneous information, correct the error(s) wherever appropriate (e.g. in the comment section or via a tweet).
4. **Communicate resolution** - In the case of an unhappy individual, if the Department took action to address the complaint, consider communicating the Department's actions to demonstrate to readers the services to the communities we serve (e.g., "In this case, we...").
5. **Remove posts or comments** if they contain any inappropriate form of content as set forth in the Department's social media comment policy.

Procedure for Removing Content

Once content is deemed by an administrator as a violation of the Department's social media comment policy, the content may be removed. First, the administrator will document the original post in its entirety and the removable content in its entirety with screen shots. The administrator will send the screen shots to the Public Affairs Manager and include the date/time of removal. This information will be stored by the Public Affairs Manager for a period of no less than two years. If any questions arise, the Public Affairs Manager shall be notified.

1055.7 SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT POLICY

The following social media comment policy will be displayed to users of all OCSD social media sites or pages or made available by hyperlink:

OCSD'S SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT POLICY

PLEASE DO NOT REPORT EMERGENCIES OR ASK FOR ASSISTANCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES. IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

By posting or commenting on any OCSD social media site/page, you agree to the terms of use of the OCSD's social media comment policy as provided herein.

Comments containing any of the following inappropriate form of content shall not be permitted on OCSD social media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction by OCSD:

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1. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments.
2. Profane, obscene, or pornographic content and/or language.
3. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
4. Libelous or defamatory comments.
5. Threats to any person or organization.
6. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law.
7. Encouragement of illegal activity.
8. Information that may tend to compromise the safety and security of the public or public systems.
9. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as posting copyrighted or trademarked material.
10. Content that advertises, promotes or offers to trade any goods or services, except in areas specifically designated for such purpose.
11. Content which constitutes harassment and/or facilitates stalking.
12. Content which violates the right to privacy.
13. Encouragement of violence.
14. Repetitive content.
15. Comments which may reasonably interfere with, inhibit or compromise law enforcement investigations, tactics, responses to incidents and/or the safety of law enforcement officers and staff.
16. Posts or comments that are apparent spam.
17. Posts or comments that contain external links.
18. Posts or comments that transmit viruses or other disruptive or destructive files, material or code.

A comment posted by a Member of the public on any OCSD 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 OCSD, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of OCSD. Further, OCSD does not guarantee or warrant that any information posted by users on this site is correct, and disclaims any liability whatsoever for any loss or damage resulting from reliance on such information.

OCSD reserves the right to deny access to OCSD social media sites for any individual who violates OCSD's social media comment policy at any time and without prior notice.

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Comments posted to this site will be monitored and inappropriate content, as defined above, will be removed as soon as possible and without prior notice. Please note that our social media settings will automatically hide a comment if profanity is used within the post.

Users of this site do not retain any rights over their postings. Postings are intended for public view and any information posted constitutes a waiver of any rights to privacy or confidentiality.

1055.8 MEDIA AND SENSITIVE INFORMATION

The Orange County Sheriff's Department primary and secondary social media efforts are focused on utilizing Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Nextdoor, Periscope, and Youtube platforms. Any additional platforms that are intended to be used shall be cleared by the Public Affairs Bureau in advance.

The Department has access to a significant amount of private information, such as records, arrest information, mug shots, and police reports. Such material shall not be released unless approved by the Public Affairs Manager or Public Information Officer (PIO). Divulging private matters, including internal operations or gossip, is strictly prohibited.

1055.9 DISCOVERY AND PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

All postings on social media sites are subject to discovery and Public Records Request Acts.

Any Social Media Post made by a member of the Department that is associated with an OCSD case will be saved in the Field Based Reporting system (FBR) under the appropriate DR.

1. [The post will be saved in the Related Case Attachment template and will include the following language:](#)
 - (a) [The OCSD created a social media post related to this DR. The post can be located via the following URLs:](#)
 - (b) [If the post has been deleted or cannot be accessed in its entirety, please contact the OCSD Social Media Specialist at \[publicaffairs@ocsd.org\]\(mailto:publicaffairs@ocsd.org\).](#)