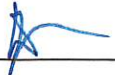
	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE	NUMBER: 101.062	District Social Media Use
	Revision Date: 10/19/2020	Author: <i>Sarah Melton, Administrative Assistant</i>	
	Review Date: 10/19/2022	Approved By: <i>Don Jarvis, Interim Fire Chief</i> 	

I. SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that any use of social media on behalf of the District is consistent with the District’s mission, vision and values.

This policy does not address personal use of social media by District personnel and applies solely to the use of official District social media accounts.

II. PURPOSE

The District may use social media as a method of effectively informing the public regarding District services, activities, incidents, events, safety information, and other relevant content.

Personnel authorized to manage the District’s social media presence shall ensure the use or access of social media is done in a manner that protects the constitutional rights of all.

III. DEFINITIONS

Social Media – Any array of internet-based tools and platforms that allow for the sharing of information, such as the District website or social networking services.

Limited Public Forum - A limited forum is a type of a designated public forum. In a “limited forum,” the government may discriminate against classes of speakers or types of speech. However, the government is still prohibited from engaging in viewpoint discrimination.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of those authorized as District social media page administrators to follow this SOP.

V. POLICY

A. Authorized Users

Only personnel authorized by the Fire Chief or the authorized designee may administer social media on behalf of the District. Authorized personnel shall only use district-issued equipment during the normal course of duty to post and monitor district-related social media, unless specifically authorized to do otherwise by the Fire Chief. Authorized page administrators shall have social media training and possess appropriate content and technical experience (see Section H: Training for more information).

Requests to post information over District social media by personnel who are not authorized to post should be made to the individual(s) assigned to manage the District's social media presence.

B. Content Guidelines

The District's goal is to ensure that communications posted on social media platforms are consistent with policy, law, and within the best interests of the District.

All content posted by designated page administrators to District social media platforms will be subject to approval by the Fire Chief or authorized designee. In addition, the following guidelines shall be observed:

1. The content posted on District social media pages shall only pertain to District-sponsored or district-endorsed programs, services, activities, or events.
2. When promoting programs, services, or events that are not hosted by the District, such as events hosted by IAFF Locals or allied agency partners, it is preferred that any content posted in relation to events originate on the hosting party's social media pages, and that the content then be re-shared on the District's social media page whenever possible.
3. Fundraising events not hosted by the District, but benefiting IAFF Locals or allied agency partners may be approved at the discretion of the Fire Chief. Approved fundraisers may include verified nonprofit groups, fire relief efforts from neighboring agencies (endorsed and vetted by said agencies), and memorial fundraisers for fallen officers. Events held by individuals not associated with the District, those with specific political affiliations or those with unclear/unverified funding routing, may be denied at the Fire Chief's discretion.
4. The District's website (www.aptosfire.com) will remain the District's primary and predominate internet presence.
5. Whenever possible and applicable, content posted to the District's social media pages will also be made available on the District's website.
6. Whenever possible and applicable, content posted to the District's social media pages shall contain hyperlinks directing visitors back to the District's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services related to conducting business with the District.

C. Appropriate Content

Only content that is appropriate for public release and conforms to District policy regarding the release of information may be posted.

Examples of appropriate content include:

1. Announcements.
2. Tips and information relating to fire safety or emergency preparedness.
3. Real-time safety information that is related to in-progress incidents, geographical warnings, or disaster information.
4. Information about District programs, services, and activities.
5. Press releases.
6. Personnel recruitment.
7. District-sponsored event information.

D. Prohibited Content

Content that is prohibited includes, but is not limited to:

1. Abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory or sexually explicit.
2. Violation of individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and those provided under state, federal or local laws.
3. Any information that could compromise an ongoing investigation.
4. Any information that could to compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation or professionalism of Aptos/La Selva Fire Protection District or its personnel.
5. Any information that could compromise the safety and security of District operations, District personnel, or patients under District care.
6. Any content posted for personal use.
7. Political campaigns or endorsement of a candidate.

8. Any content that has not been properly authorized by the Fire Chief or their authorized designee.

Personnel who become aware of content on the District's social media pages that they believe is unauthorized or inappropriate should promptly report such content to a supervisor. The supervisor will then report the unauthorized or inappropriate content to a designated page administrator who will ensure its removal from public view and investigate the unauthorized or inappropriate posting.

E. Public Posting Prohibited

District social media pages shall be designed and maintained to prevent posting of content by the public. (This does not include comments made in response to District posts.)

The District may provide a method for members of the public to contact the District directly through social media platforms, i.e. direct messaging.

F. Content Monitoring and Removal

For the purposes of determining whether or not to remove content or comments made by the public on District social media pages, the District's social media accounts shall be considered a limited public forum in relation to First Amendment-protected speech.

District's position on whether or not to remove certain types of comments or content will be reviewed on a regular basis with District Counsel.

Content subject to removal will be limited to speech not protected by the First Amendment:

1. Obscenity
2. Defamation
3. Actual Threats
4. Spam
5. Illegal Activities
6. Malware Links
7. Promotion of Illegal Discrimination
8. Copyright of Another

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink on all District social media pages. The decision to remove content can only be made by the Fire Chief or their authorized designee. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained with the District. Any content removed for the above stated reasons will be documented via screenshot complete with the date of removal, time of removal, and identity of the poster, and stored in a clearly identified secure folder on the District's shared server. Additionally, any removed content will be forwarded to and again documented by the individual designated by the Fire Chief to manage the District's social media accounts.

The decision to remove content as referenced in these guidelines will be applied uniformly.

G. Records Retention

The District's social media pages are subject to the [California Public Records Act](#). Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to District business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication is a public record. The District is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any records requests relating to social media. Wherever possible, District social media pages shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting may be, or are subject, to public disclosure upon request.

California Law and District records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. The District shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a District server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.

H. Training

Designated page administrators and personnel authorized to post to the District's social media pages shall receive training that, at minimum, addresses legal issues concerning the appropriate use of social media platforms, as well as privacy, civil rights, dissemination and retention of information posted on District pages.