

**WARREN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES,  
EMA DIVISION  
POLICY / PROCEDURE**

## **WARREN COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

*The Warren County Department of Emergency Services (WCDES), EMA Division personnel shall follow the below established procedures for the operations of all Department Social Media Sites.*

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### **PURPOSE:**

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media sites by the Warren County Department of Emergency Services (WCDES). The intended purpose behind establishing WCDES social media sites is to disseminate information about the Department's events, research, projects, outreach initiatives, findings, news, information, etc. to interested parties.

Social media is content created by individuals, using accessible, expanded, and upgradeable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. It provides ways for users to interact (such as file sharing and discussion groups) to build communities of people with common interests. Warren County web logs or "blogs" facilitate further discussion of topics related to governance by providing members of the public the opportunity to submit comments regarding the shared information. For purposes of this policy, "comments" include information, articles, pictures, videos, or any other form of communicative content posted on a Warren County social media site.

### **PROCEDURE:**

#### **I. GENERAL POLICY**

- A. The establishment and use of social media sites by WCDES are subject to approval by the department director. All WCDES social media sites are to be administered by the Emergency Services Department staff.
- B. WCDES social media sites shall make it clear that they are maintained by the Emergency Services Department and that they follow the Social Media Policy of both the WCDES and Warren County.
- C. Social media sites should link back to the appropriate department on the official website; <https://www.co.warren.oh.us/emergencyservices/emergencymanagement/default.aspx>.
- D. Guidelines shall be displayed and made readily available to users.

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- E. The WCDES website will remain the Emergency Services Department’s primary and predominant internet presence for official department business, contact, assistance, and information.
- F. All social media sites maintained by the WCDES shall adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.
- G. All social media sites are subject to the Ohio Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format related to the Emergency Services Department, including a list of subscribers, posted communications, and communication submitted for posting, may be public record, subject to public disclosure pursuant to Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code. Records requests made through social media sites will be handled and managed according to the Warren County Board of Commissioners Public Records Policy and the Ohio Sunshine Laws.
- H. The department reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of the Social Media Policy or any applicable law.
- I. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of the WCDES may be removed.
- J. Any blog post, comment, Facebook post, Tweet, etc. removed from an Emergency Services Department social media page that is public record must be kept in accordance with the Warren County General Retention Schedule, Public Records Policy, or the Comment Policy (Section III).
- K. Employees are representing the Emergency Services Department and Warren County through these social media sites and shall conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the County and in accordance with the Warren County Personnel Policy.
- L. Posting of content, graphics, and other information on any WCDES social media sites will not endorse, contain, or link to privately-owned or publicly-owned companies where able. When utilizing borrowed content, graphics, or other information, WCDES will utilize reputable sources such as those hosted on .org, .edu, or .gov sites. Proper credit to original content owners will be expressed (where applicable and able).
- M. This Social Media Policy is in addition to the Social Media Policy of the county and may be revised at any time.

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## **II. CONTENT MANAGEMENT**

- A. The EMA staff member on-call will be responsible for the content and monitoring of the department's social media sites. This staff member will be authorized to create, edit, and delete posts on the WCDES social media sites (i.e., EMA Facebook and Twitter pages). Content on these sites will be updated at the discretion of the on-call staff member and / or at the request of the department manager / director. Some events, occasions, and topics may influence more updates and participation than others.
- B. The on-call staff member will have a weekly presence on the social media sites to monitor activity and respond to comments and messages. If the on-call staff member decides to remove a post in accordance with this Social Media Policy, they shall do so in a manner that ensures all sites are maintained consistently.

## **III. COMMENT POLICY**

- A. The WCDES social media sites are intended to serve as a mechanism for communication between the public and WCDES as long as discussions remain appropriate and are compliant with the Public Records Policy and Social Media Policy. As a public entity, the WCDES must abide by certain stands to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. The Emergency Services Department's social media sites shall comply with its mission, which is to support and protect the citizens and visitors of our communities by helping them limit the effects of disasters.
- B. A comment posted by a member of the public on any WCDES social media site is the opinion of the commenter or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the WCDES, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the WCDES or Warren County government as a whole.
- C. Comments posted to the social media page will be monitored, including comments requesting responses and in violation of this policy, and may be removed if they are in violation of this policy. WCDES reserves the right to deny access to its social media sites for any individual, who violates this Social Media Policy, at any time without prior notice. Perceived misuse by an employee should be reported directly to the department director, who will determine appropriate discipline.
- D. All comments posted to any WCDES social media site are bound to the respected sites' Terms of Service, Statement of Rights, User Agreement, etc., and the Warren County Department of Emergency Services reserves the right to report any violation of these

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agreements with the intent of said site taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action. WCDES reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments containing, but not limited to the following types of content:

1. Vulgar, profane, obscene, violent, or offensive language and sexual content or links to such content;
2. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, national origin, military status, disability, genetic information, or sexual orientation;
3. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments;
4. Spam or solicitations of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
5. Content that advocates illegal activity and violation of any federal, state, or local law;
6. Endorsement or advertisement of a vendor's products or services;
7. Content that supports or opposes political views, campaigns, or ballot measures;
8. Infringement upon copyrights or trademarks;
9. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public, public systems or first responders;
10. Defamatory or personal attacks;
11. Threats to any person or organization;
12. Repetitive or duplicative posts by single or multiple users.

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**IV. LINKS, ENDORSEMENT, AND ADVERTISING**

- A. WCDES social media sites may contain hypertext or other links to external internet sites that are not provided or maintained by the WCDES. Please note that WCDES cannot guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of these external sites.
  
- B. In addition to material posted by WCDES, these pages may include ads and suggestions for other profiles to view selected by the social media site that links to third party sites included in user comments. The inclusion of these ads, profiles, and links is outside of the control of WCDES and are not an official endorsement of any product, person, or service, and may not be quoted or reproduced for the purpose of stating or implying endorsement or approval of any product, person, or service. The WCDES does not receive any revenue from any of these links of sites.