

POLICY ALERT

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

POLICY-DV-1709

“SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY” (POLICY-DV-1709), as attached, is a new policy approved effective October 1, 2023.

This policy applies to all Intercity Transit employees.

For questions about this policy, please contact Ally McPherson.

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 1 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

See Also: N/A

Approved by: Emily Bergkamp
Emily Bergkamp, Interim General ManagerPeter Stackpole
Peter Stackpole, Development DirectorWritten by: Ally McPherson

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Definitions: Intercity Transit (IT) is the local transit authority in Thurston County and hereby sets forth the following policy and disclaimers for its use of social media. "Social media" is defined as any web-based platform hosted by a third-party that enables users to participate in social networking. It is a term that encompasses various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, TikTok, Instagram, Reddit, YouTube, Flickr, Wikipedia, blogs and website comment sections.

This policy applies to all Intercity Transit staff. The policy also includes information about oversight of our social media platforms and the conduct expected of everyone commenting on our social media accounts.

This policy applies to all Intercity Transit employees.

I. POLICY PURPOSE

Social media tools are a powerful way to communicate and are used by millions of individuals and groups to share information and connect with audiences. IT uses social media tools and channels when appropriate to enhance communication and engagement with the public, partners, stakeholders, customers, and others to support its mission, vision, key goals, and core services. Social media allows IT to share information beyond the conventional web experience. However, IT encourages anyone interested in more information to visit its official website, intercitytransit.com.

IT considers social media a valuable tool to facilitate communication and transparency with the public, stakeholders and our customers. IT utilizes social media, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn to keep our audiences up to date on the latest agency news and to help others learn more about the agency. Facebook is also used to host live streams of Intercity Transit Authority meetings and IT's Twitter feed is intended to keep transit-passengers informed of travel impacts with the posting of rider alerts.

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 2 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

This policy describes how the agency will use social media and gives IT staff direction and guidelines for proper use of social media in connection with their Intercity Transit role while at work and outside the workplace.

II. MANAGEMENT OF INTERCITY TRANSIT'S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The Intercity Transit communications, marketing, and outreach team, at the direction of the chief marketing and communications officer or designee(s), is responsible for establishing and supervising all social media accounts for the organization. This includes establishing, monitoring, and administering policies for appropriate conduct, content, security, and records retention on all social media accounts for the agency. These accounts are considered agency tools. Individual staff or departments may not establish an Intercity Transit social media account without approval from the chief marketing and communications officer.

Social media channels are external communication channels. Their primary purpose is to engage with customers and members of the public. The posting and maintenance of content on IT social media accounts is limited to the social media representatives designated by the chief marketing and communications officer. Only the social media representatives are to login and/or post content to agency social media accounts. Social media account management shall take place during paid work hours using work-issued equipment. As such, social media accounts will be monitored during the business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. This information will be noted in the bio section or about section of each social media account.

III. OVERSIGHT

IT monitors its social media accounts Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and will respond to inquiries in a timely manner. Please note, responses may be delayed Friday – Sunday and on holidays. However, all service-related questions or comments that require an immediate response should be directed to IT Customer Service by calling 360-786-1881. Customer questions may also be answered via email customerservice@intercitytransit.com or by visiting intercitytransit.com.

A. COMMENT POLICY

Comments made on Intercity Transit social media platforms are reviewed and screened in accordance with our [Comment Policy](#).

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 3 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

The following tools provide an opportunity for sharing and discussing information about Intercity Transit programs and activities:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Instagram](#)

The comments and opinions expressed by users of these tools are theirs alone and do not reflect the opinions of Intercity Transit or its employees. All public comments are reviewed. They are screened in accordance with the Intercity Transit comment policy.

- Comments will not be edited by Intercity Transit or its staff. Only comments that comply with this comment policy remain on the post.
- The use of vulgar, offensive, threatening, or harassing language is prohibited.
- Public comments should be limited to comments related to the posted topic. These sites are not the proper place to express opinions or beliefs not directly related to that topic.
- They are not open to comments promoting or opposing any person campaigning for election to a political office or promoting or opposing any ballot proposition.
- They are not open to the promotion or advertisement of a business or commercial transaction.
- Communications made through any social media network messaging system will in no way constitute a legal or official notice or comment to Intercity Transit or any official or employee of Intercity Transit for any purpose.
- Comments specific to an Intercity Transit project or program should be submitted directly to that project or program.
- This comment policy is subject to amendment or modification at any time to ensure its continued use is consistent with its intended purpose as a limited forum.

Questions or concerns regarding the comment policy should be directed to media@intercitytransit.com.

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 4 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

If someone makes an inappropriate comment that violates IT's social media policy, remind them to be respectful of the comment policy.

Example Response: "We keep this a safe place for discussion and education, free of [INSERT INFRACTION]. Any comments that go against our community guidelines (share where posted) will be removed. Please feel free to comment again with respect for the guidelines.

IV. STAFF ACCESS TO SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

IT staff may view social media for professional use. Professional use is defined as furthering specific job responsibilities or promoting professional development. Reasonable use in this manner for professional use during work hours is permitted. If staff needs to create social media content to accomplish a specific task related to agency business, they must obtain prior approval of their manager.

IT staff may view the organization's social media accounts for the purpose of staying informed of agency external communications. Staff may like, share, or tag Intercity Transit social media content. When commenting, staff need to adhere to the comment policy.

V. STAFF REQUEST FOR NEW SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT(S)

If staff or a department (HR, Vanpool, etc.) would like a social media account for business purposes, they must request it through the chief marketing and communications officer. Current examples of program accounts include Walk N Roll's Facebook and Instagram as well the Bicycle Community Challenge's Facebook and Twitter. All Intercity Transit social media accounts are subject to the Public Records Act and are required to have all content regularly captured using Pagefreezer. Social media accounts must be monitored daily and updated regularly (at least a few times per week).

When making your request for a social media account, please be prepared to discuss the following items:

- 1) Will the social media account directly support or enhance activities being undertaken by the agency?
- 2) What's the business need to create a social media account(s) separate from the existing IT account(s)?
- 3) Identify how your department will manage the account(s) including, staff who will be responsible for the account, a rough estimate as to how often you will post, etc.

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 5 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

- 4) Identify how your department will monitor the account for feedback and/or address comments that may violate IT's comment policy.

A. ACCOUNT REQUIREMENTS

Each official IT social media account must have a primary contact who is responsible for passwords, onboarding, training, and offboarding employees who have access to that account. The primary contact must be a permanent, full-time employee. Agency accounts must also have a backup contact who fills in when the primary contact is unavailable or on leave. All content needs to follow brand guidelines and maintain a professional presence.

Any social media account that hasn't been approved by the chief marketing and communications officer will be deleted immediately.

VI. STAFF PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Intercity Transit takes no position on individuals' personal use of social media outside the workplace (that is, using personal time and resources). Employees should not use their IT email account or password in conjunction with a personal social networking account. Additionally, it is the agency's obligation to inform all staff of their responsibilities regarding communications involving the agency, its employees and its stakeholders on personal social media sites:

B. PUBLIC RECORDS

Staff need to be aware when posting content on personal social media accounts relating to Intercity Transit business that this content may be considered a public record subject to retention and disclosure under the Washington State Public Records Act (RCW 42.56.010). This requires that government agencies preserve public records regardless of physical form including the digital records created through social media and the metadata behind the records. All comments or posts made related to IT's account walls or pages are public, not private. This means that both the posts of the agency and any feedback by other employees or non-employees, including citizens, will become part of the public record. For that reason, employees are prohibited from using personal social media to conduct agency business. As a best practice, employees should share information from IT's social media accounts to their personal accounts.

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 6 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

C. STAFF CANNOT REPRESENT INTERCITY TRANSIT ON PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Staff will not speak on behalf of Intercity Transit on their personal social media account(s) except as authorized by the chief marketing and communications officer. Staff who mention their affiliation with Intercity Transit on a personal social media account(s) should identify any views they express as theirs alone and are not representative of the views of the agency. Staff should be aware when posting comments, some sites will pull information from your profile and post it as an identifier.

D. DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL AGENCY INFORMATION IS PROHIBITED

Staff may not post confidential or private information about the agency, board members, staff, or Intercity Transit stakeholders on any social media site. Avoid sharing any media which may include confidential or private information (for example, photos with reports on desks or computer screens in the background).

E. USE OF INTERCITY TRANSIT NAME, LOGO AND MEDIA IS LIMITED

Staff may list Intercity Transit as his or her employer on a personal social media account, but use of the IT logo is prohibited. Use of other agency media (for example, photos, images, or video) is allowed with attribution to IT. Use of the agency's name and/or logo to promote personal causes or political beliefs; solicit or conduct outside employment; or engage in similar unofficial usage, on a social media site is prohibited. Employees may not identify themselves in a way that suggests or implies they are speaking as a representative for the company.

VII. RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

Common sense and sound judgment are the best tools in avoiding problems. The following best practices are highly recommended for any Intercity Transit staff who use social media for personal use:

Be respectful. Individuals should be thoughtful in personal posts and respectful of how other people in your work and personal life may be affected or viewed by those who read your posts. When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.

Honor others' privacy. If you plan on posting photos you have taken of work-related events and activities, be courteous by checking first with co-workers who are in the

Effective: October 1, 2023

Page: 7 of 7

Cancels: New

POLICY-DV-1709

picture. Not everyone wants their photo displayed on the Internet. Similarly, if you want to tag a co-worker's profile in a post, check with them to make sure they're OK with it prior to publishing.

Strive for accuracy. Make sure you have your facts straight before posting. Correct errors quickly. If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and quickly provide the correct information. If appropriate, modify an earlier post to make it clear that you have corrected an error.

Be aware of your Intercity Transit association. If you identify yourself as Intercity Transit staff or have a public facing position for which your Intercity Transit association is known to the general public, ensure your profile and related content (even if it is of a personal and not in an official nature) reflects Intercity Transit professionally.

Have no expectation of privacy. It's social media, after all. Remember that posts in the social media world are or can easily be made available to the public at-large. Keep in mind that what you publish will be widely accessible for some time and, in some cases, indefinitely.