

TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
**STATEWIDE OPERATING STANDARD**

<b>No. GA 1.18</b>	<b>Page 1 of 5</b>	<b>Effective Date: 05/05/2020</b>
<b>DIVISION:</b>	<b>General Administration</b>	
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Employee Use of Social Media</b>	
<b>AUTHORITY:</b>	<b>Minute Order # 76-09</b>	
<b>PROPOSED BY:</b>	<b>Nick Alvarado</b>	
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Vice President of Communication and Creative Services</b>	<b>Date: 05/05/2020</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	<b>Gail Lawrence</b>	
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Executive Vice Chancellor</b>	<b>Date: 05/05/2020</b>
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	<b>Mike Reeser</b>	
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Chancellor</b>	<b>Date: 05/05/2020</b>

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**I. STATEWIDE STANDARD**

**POLICY:** It is the policy of Texas State Technical College (TSTC) that the College supports employee use of social media for business purposes in accordance with the Operating Requirements of this Statewide Operating Standard (SOS).

## II. PERTINENT INFORMATION

TSTC has intentionally grown its participation in social media to strengthen its brand and its connection with prospects, customers, and key influencers. Social media including networking sites such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, and *LinkedIn*; blogging sites; news sharing and bookmarking sites; and photo-, video-, and slide-sharing sites such as *flickr*, *YouTube*, and *Slideshare* can be avenues for communication in the professional and personal lives of TSTC employees. Used responsibly, social media sites provide an effective way to keep abreast of new trends and topics, to share information and perspectives, and to build and strengthen relationships. TSTC has thousands of individuals who connect with TSTC via “tweets,” fan pages, photos, and video channels regularly.

## III. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Given the reach of the internet and its future development and expansion, it is imperative that employees of TSTC understand their freedoms and responsibilities in regards to social media sites. For this reason, the College has established basic guidelines for using these various forms of media through this SOS, as well as those outlined within SOS [GA 1.7 Dissemination of Information and News to the Public](#).

## IV. DEFINITIONS

**Social Media:** Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking (such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, etc.).

**Social Networking Sites:** Online platforms that allow users to create public profiles and interact with other users on the website.

**Transitory Information:** Information of temporary usefulness that is not an integral part of a records series, not essential to the fulfillment of statutory obligations, or not essential to the documentation of agency functions. Some examples of transitory information, which can be in any medium (voice mail, fax, email, hard copy, message, slips, etc.), are routine messages, telephone messages notifications, internal meeting notices, or other similar routine information used for communication. Transitory information also includes, but is not limited to, various social media postings such as *Twitter* tweets and postings on *Facebook*.

## V. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The Chancellor, or his/her designee, has the authority and responsibility to establish procedures to meet the requirements of this SOS.

## **VI. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

1. Each employee, department, division, and campus-affiliated organization adheres to the operating requirements of this SOS.
2. Employees register any personal social media sites that are used professionally for TSTC.
3. Employees follow confidentiality and copyright requirements as outlined by the College.
4. Media relations are managed through the Department of Communication and Creative Services.

## APPENDIX

### VII. RELATED STATEWIDE STANDARDS, LEGAL CITATIONS, OR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

[GA 1.7 Dissemination of Information and News to the Public](#)  
[TSTC Communication & Creative Services Visual Guide](#)

### VIII. OPERATING REQUIREMENTS:

Any employee wishing to use social media for TSTC to further his or her relationship with prospects, customers, and key influencers, shall work under the following guidelines:

1. Reflect the values of TSTC. Employees must protect and build TSTC's brand if using social media by exemplifying the values of excellence, leadership, innovation, collaboration, responsiveness, accountability, and stewardship.
2. Update and respond to information. Part of the appeal in social media is that the conversation occurs almost in real time. Therefore, employees must be mindful to take the time to refresh content, respond to questions, update information regularly, and correct information when appropriate.
3. Include a disclaimer. TSTC employees posting on social media sites must include a disclaimer that the thoughts and opinions expressed are not official College policy. A disclaimer should essentially state, "These messages contain the thoughts and opinions of <individual name> and do not represent official TSTC policy."
4. Protect confidential information and relationships, including copyright protected information. Online postings and conversations are not private. Employees must be cognizant that postings will be recoverable for an extended time period and could be shared by others. Employees must obtain permission, when appropriate, before posting pictures of others, or before posting any copyrighted information. TSTC is an open records state agency. Employees must never discuss unannounced technical or organizational changes, personnel issues, or anything considered "confidential."
5. Be respectful to the College, employees, students, partners, and competitors. Employees must avoid identifying and discussing others by name, including students, partners, suppliers, friends, and co-workers, unless the information is public record or permission has been granted prior to sharing the identifying

information. Employees shall use good taste, refrain from insults, maintain level-headedness, avoid inflammatory comments, and express ideas in a clear, logical manner.

6. Use social media postings to extend and not interfere with work objectives. TSTC encourages employee use of social media in recruiting, communicating with absentee students, notifying about events, and establishing faculty as authorities in their field among other work functions.
7. Reserve the solicitation of news media coverage for and refer inquiries from the news media to the Department of Communication and Creative Services. TSTC shall ensure all statements are truthful and substantiated. If an employee response or comment on a specific item is required, details must be verified through current TSTC published information before any response is posted. If engaged by a member of the media, employees must refer inquiries to the Department of Communication and Creative Services.
8. Register with TSTC's Department of Communication and Creative Services. Any employee who uses social media for discussing or promoting TSTC-related business shall notify, in writing, TSTC's Department of Communication and Creative Services and provide the employee's name and URLs of any social media sites used for business purposes or media integrated within the TSTC website.
9. Follow applicable records retention guidelines. Employees shall ensure that, depending on the nature of the communication in the social media, compliance is maintained with records retention requirements. In most cases, the information is transitory and retained for its period of usefulness only.
10. Follow Established Operating Procedures. Operating procedures detailed in the [TSTC Communication & Creative Services Visual Standards Guide](#) shall be observed at all times.