

3.44 - EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Effective: December 1, 2025

Purpose: This policy establishes expectations for the use of social media by University employees while ensuring compliance with the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) Social Media Policy and federal and state law. This policy clarifies when social media activity by an employee may be considered official state action.

Scope: This policy applies to all University employees.

Responsible Office: President's Office

Policy Statement:

The University respects its employees' First Amendment rights and the principles of academic freedom in the responsible use of existing and emerging communications technologies, including social media, but may regulate the use of social media by employees within the bounds of the First Amendment.

Prohibited Actions

Employees must not use social media in a manner that:

- Discloses confidential or protected information;
- Violates federal or state law;
- Incites violence, threats, or unlawful conduct;
- Improperly attributes personal views to the University;
- Interferes with the employee's ability to perform their job or disrupts University operations; OR
- Violates other University policies, including policies on professional conduct, nondiscrimination, and use of state resources.

Employees must not create, manage, or operate personal social media accounts during work time using University resources in a manner that interferes with job responsibilities. University owned devices, networks, and branding should be used only for official University business.

This policy does not regulate protected speech made by employees as private citizens on matters of public concern. However, employees remain responsible for ensuring that their personal social media activity does not reasonably appear to be authorized or endorsed by the University.

An employee's personal social media account may be considered government accounts when the account holder has the authority to speak on the government's behalf and exercises that authority through speech on social media. A government account is considered a public record and is subject to laws and regulations that a private account is

not required to follow. In order to avoid a personal account from being considered a government account, employees should:

- Keep personal accounts separate from University business;
- Understand and use privacy settings to manage their account;
- Post a disclaimer on their personal account that identifies the account purpose and states that the opinions they express are their own personal opinions;
- Forward University-related comments to the proper University official or office for official response;
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- Avoid posting content that would fit within the scope of their employment or position;
- Avoid linking private or personal accounts to an official University account; AND
- Avoid using University devices to maintain their private account.

If an employee operates their personal account in a manner that could result in the account being considered a government account, it is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that all posts and information about the account are preserved in a manner that complies with applicable policies, laws, and regulations.

Enforcement

Violations of this policy may result in corrective or disciplinary action consistent with University policies, Board of Regents policies, and Kansas law. Violations related to misuse of official accounts or unlawful disclosure of confidential information may also result in legal consequences.

Definitions: All words and phrases shall be interpreted utilizing their plain meanings unless otherwise defined in another University or Board of Regents policy or by statute or regulation.

Social Media – Any online tool or service through which virtual communities are created allowing users to publish commentary and other content, including but not limited to, blogs, wikis, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, Flickr, and YouTube, but which does not include e-mail sent to a known and finite number of individuals, or non-social sharing or networking platforms such as Listserv and group or team collaboration websites.

Procedures: All procedures linked and related to the policies above shall have the full force and effect of policy if said procedures have first been properly approved by the University's administrator in charge of Human Resources.

[[Hyperlink to Human Resources Procedures](#)]

Related Policy Information: [[Hyperlink to KBOR Use of Social Media by Faculty and Staff Policy - https://kansasregents.org/about/policies-by-laws-missions/board_policy_manual_2/chapter_ii_governance_state_universities_2/chapter_ii_full_text#social](https://kansasregents.org/about/policies-by-laws-missions/board_policy_manual_2/chapter_ii_governance_state_universities_2/chapter_ii_full_text#social)]

History: Adopted: 04/17/2015 [FSB 14011 approved by President]
Revised: 08/15/2024 [Policy format revised as part of UPM Revision]
Revised: 12/01/2025 [Policy revised to comply with KBOR policy and law]

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