



Social Media Operational Guidelines

Social media is an incredibly powerful communication tool. Social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, as well as blogs, all offer unique opportunities to engage in meaningful discussion and share information.

But with great power comes great responsibility, and, if misused, social media platforms can pose serious risks to CCCS's reputation and confidential information.

CCCS System President's Procedures 3-125f outlines the procedures for operation of social media accounts and expectations as to employee social media conduct. These guidelines are intended to provide employees with the tools to speak effectively through social media on behalf of CCCS.

As an employee of CCCS, you are personally responsible for any social media activity you conduct as part of your job duties, including Colorado Career and Technical Education ("CTE"). You are also responsible for any social media activity conducted when using a CCCS email address; and/or which can be traced back to a CCCS domain; and/or which uses the CCCS's Information Systems; and/or which expressly or implicitly identifies you as a CCCS employee.

These guidelines are not intended to govern or restrict personal participation in social media using your personal e-mail address or to restrict legally protected employee discussions.

Be human. Be respectful. Be thoughtful.

At its core, CCCS's social media guidelines are driven by three simple tenets:

Be human. Social media is about having real relationships with real people, and CCCS's social media presence is built on giving people in our institution a human face and voice. It is important not to come across as corporate, bureaucratic, or robotic. Rather, speak like a human being.

Be respectful. Our work affects many people - our employees, our faculty, our students, our communities - and it is crucial to treat them with the respect they deserve. Avoid insulting anyone or inciting any kind of inflammatory remarks, and it is best to use a polite tone when disagreeing with others' opinions.

Be thoughtful. Anytime you speak on behalf of CCCS, you are the voice of the institution, and it is important to keep that responsibility in mind. This means knowing and following CCCS's policies, procedures and rules, and constantly being aware of the consequences of anything that you post publicly.

The DOs and DON'Ts of using Social Media on behalf of CCCS

<u>DO</u>	<u>DON'T</u>
Speak like a human Use common sense Think before publishing Treat others with respect	Publish confidential information Insult others or incite inflammatory remarks Post on behalf of CCCS unless you are authorized Keep social media mistakes to yourself

GETTING INTO THE SPECIFICS

This section will help you better understand our specific guidelines as they relate to your social media behavior and CCCS.

1) Setting up a CCCS social media account

When setting up or maintaining a social media account, in order to protect business continuity, all accounts must have more than one employee assigned to the role of administrator at all times. If an administrator leaves the system for any reason or no longer wishes to be an administrator, it is their department's responsibility to designate another system employee to be an account administrator and remove the former employee's administrative permissions.

2) Publishing on social media platforms

If you are speaking or posting information "on behalf of CCCS" online, you must have the required prior approval to serve as a spokesperson for the subject matter. You can refer to CCCS's [Media Operational Guidelines](#) to read more about this or learn how to become a Social Media Spokesperson. When you discuss CCCS business on a social media website, you must always be clear whether you are speaking on behalf of the institution or expressing your own personal opinion. If you are speaking in a personal capacity on topics relating to your role at CCCS, it is vital to be very clear that you are expressing your own opinions or beliefs.

If you make an error on a social media post, be the first person to respond to your own mistake – and make it clear in a post that you have done so. If the error is particularly serious, contact a representative from the Public Affairs team for help on what to do.

3) Understanding potential impact

When communicating about CCCS in your official capacity, be thoughtful.

Respect your audience by being honest and mindful of how your communication may be perceived by others in terms of content, style and tone. CCCS's Code of Ethics is a useful guide for understanding what this means in terms of specific issues that may arise when using social media, including:

- **Antitrust.** To avoid antitrust issues, you should not communicate on sensitive topics, including but not limited to future operating plans or communications regarding the price or supply of materials or services.
- **Business ethics.** Communications should exhibit a commitment to integrity, high ethical standards and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- **Conflict of interest.** Communications about outside interests can reveal conflicts of interest that must be disclosed to CCCS; there should be no use of CCCS information for personal benefit or in a way that is detrimental to the System or member colleges; there should be no communication about CCCS contracting, bidding or pricing.
- **Foreign trade.** You should not talk about controlled technology or controlled technological products.
- **Political contributions/endorsements.** There should be no suggestion that CCCS contributes to political candidates, parties or partisan organizations, and in accordance with SP 16-60, social media platforms cannot be used to give the appearance that CCCS is advocating for or against a candidate for an elected office, or a ballot issue or referred measure.

4) Using social media at work

Accessing social media at work (or through CCCS's network) is intended for business purposes only.

CCCS recognizes that on occasion, employees may access social media at work for minimal incidental personal use. And, of course, personal social media use should never interfere with productivity or job performance.

Any use of CCCS's network (computing or telecommunications resources) - whether for work or personal use - must comply with BP 3-125, SP 3-125f, and any applicable information security requirements/guidelines issued by Information Technology.

5) Using CCCS hashtags in your personal social media

While Public Affairs will be responsible for handling all posts from official CCCS social media platforms, there may be times that it is appropriate for employees to post from their own social media accounts with a CCCS-related hashtag (such as participating in a community event).

To maximize the reach and effectiveness of the hashtags during a CCCS event, Public Affairs will create and share specific hashtags to be used during appropriate times.

At all times, please abide by the guidelines of both our [Media Operational Guidelines](#) and these Social Media Operational Guidelines when using CCCS hashtags, and consider the implications of your public post in the greater social media context.

6) Protecting CCCS and yourself

Media Requests. If a member of the media contacts you about CCCS-related blogs or social media postings or requests CCCS information of any kind, get in touch with someone at Public Affairs. You can read more about this in our [Media Operational Guidelines](#).

Confidentiality. Always maintain the confidentiality of CCCS's private and confidential information.

- Do not post internal reports, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications.
- Do not disclose confidential financial information as part of a social media post, such as information regarding revenues, expenses, profits, costs and bids.
- Do not reveal confidential or proprietary information about CCCS students, employees or alumni.
- When sharing information about CCCS, consider whether the information has already been publicly disclosed and whether it is appropriate for a public forum. When in doubt, check with Public Affairs before sharing that information.
- Basically, use common sense and do not publicly post information about CCCS that is meant to be private. For more specifics, consult our BP 3-70 Colorado Community College System [Code of Ethics](#).

Security. Always think twice before downloading a file or following a link. Social media sites top the list today for ways to inject malicious software and viruses into an organization's computer network. Learn more about how to stay safe with our BP 3-125, SP 3-125f, and any applicable information security requirements/guidelines issued by Information Technology.

DEALING WITH NEGATIVE CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

While the dialogue-based nature of social media can have extraordinary benefits in terms of building trust by listening to and engaging your audience, it also opens the door for the influx of negative comments on CCCS's pages. There are two types of negative comments that might appear on CCCS's social media pages, which should be dealt with differently:

Illegal or Noncompliant Posts or Comments

Certain content is illegal and/or *inappropriate for the social media platforms, based on their own terms and conditions for using their site.* These include things like abusive language, obscenity/nudity, hate speech, threats and violence. (For a representative sample of acceptable platform use, feel free to review Facebook's [Community Standards](#).)

These comments can be reported directly to social media channels through their platform-specific reporting systems: [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#).

If you identify any content that someone has posted on our social platforms page that you feel is illegal or in violation of applicable terms and conditions, please reach out to the Public Affairs Team, who will report it directly to the platform.

Other content may not be compliant with CCCS established standards for a particular social media account. For example, users engaging with CCCS social media for commercial advertisements or gain may have content removed. Additionally, sites may have a limited purpose or be limited to a specified subject matter, and off-topic posts may be removed.

Unfavorable Posts or Comments

In contrast, unfavorable posts or comments are *those that are within platform guidelines for acceptable use, but are less-than-complimentary to CCCS or our programs.*

This is a far more sensitive matter, but also a potential opportunity to build credibility and trust with our target audience by engaging in meaningful discussion around contentious issues.

If you become aware of unfavorable content posted on a CCCS social media site or unfavorable comments concerning CCCS that are posted on an unaffiliated site, please notify the Public Affairs team.

Due to the sensitive nature of these discussions, and the need for alignment in our messaging stance, we ask that CCCS employees **do not** respond directly to or hide, delete or block unfavorable comments on social media. Instead, flag the post or comment to the Public Affairs team, who will respond appropriately.

A Few Parting Thoughts For Authorized Spokespersons

Here are a few general guidelines meant to make your life easier as you navigate your role as a spokesperson for CCCS on social media.

Respect images of other CCCS employees/students. You can post photos of

employees or students in spaces or at events to which CCCS allows public access without seeking the permission of the employee or students in the photograph. However, any photos posted of employees or students at a private event requires advanced permission from the employee or student.

Always take a moment to think before posting. The Internet is forever, and you cannot take back what you have published online. As a spokesperson for CCCS, it is important to pause and think carefully about the consequences of anything that you post on social media.

Use common sense. You are personally responsible for what you publish on blogs or social media. If what you are about to publish is something that makes you or your peers uncomfortable, stop and assess whether it passes the “common sense” test. If it does not, do not publish it.

Some topics are strictly off-limits. There are certain things you should never be posting publicly. Internal emails, confidential financial information, student data, legal information or anything that does not belong to you (or that you are not authorized to publish, such as copyrighted materials).

NOTE: These guidelines are meant to protect you and CCCS, not to inhibit open dialogue. Nothing in these guidelines is intended to preclude or dissuade discussions among employees about their wages, terms and/or conditions of employment, or other legally protected or required activities. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to the Public Affairs team.

Monitoring Employee’s Use of Social Media

CCCS reserves the right to visit and monitor public social media sites to ensure that employees are not violating this or other CCCS policies.

Sanctions

Use of social media that violates CCCS policies, procedures or rules may result in discipline up to and including termination.