

Indian Affairs Social Media Guidelines

IA and associated offices will follow the social media policy established by the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI). For specific rules for the use of social media within DOI, please refer to the [DOI Social Media Policy](#) at <http://www.interior.gov/notices/Social-Media-Policy.cfm>. The Indian Affairs (IA) Social Media Guidebook applies to all IA employees, including the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs (AS-IA), the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE).

Before requesting or using social media within IA, employees should read, understand and consult the following:

- [DOI Social Media Policy](#)
- [DOI Social Media Guidance Handbook](#)
- [DOI Social Media Terms of Service Guidance](#)
- [New Media Glossary of Terms](#)

Terms of Service Agreements

The General Services Administration (GSA) works with a variety of social media service providers and vendors to negotiate Terms of Service (TOS) agreements that are acceptable for government agencies. Currently, DOI has TOS agreements for its bureaus and agencies to utilize Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and YouTube. For more information, view the [DOI Social Media TOS Guidance](#).

Social Media Platforms

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and DOI have clear definitions of social media platforms. The main social media platforms discussed in this document are web publishing tools, social networking tools, and media sharing tools.

Web publishing platforms are used to create, publish and reuse content. Blogging and microblogging tools such as WordPress and Twitter provide constituents who follow these content sources with immediate updates for news, emergency and other content updates.

Social networking tools such as Facebook are used to publish content and provide interactions among users. Crowdsourcing/Social Voting tools, otherwise known as Ideation tools, are also used to provide interaction and collaboration among constituents. Tools such as IA Ask and IA Improve enable Indian Affairs to gather suggestions for improvement and efficiency via crowdsourcing techniques. They also allow IA to address issues and answer questions between BIA and its constituents.

Media sharing tools such as Flickr and YouTube are used to share files and host content storage.

Requesting a Social Media Platform

The IA point of contact for social media is the Office of Public Affairs (OPA). All social media instances representing IA must be approved by OPA prior to the creation of any social media accounts. For each IA office that receives permission to use a social media presence (Twitter, Flickr, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) there must be a designated administrator(s) responsible for moderating or posting on social media platforms while obeying the rules set forth by DOI policy and the IA guidelines set forth in this document. Although administrators are not required to obtain approval on every item posted on a social media instance, OPA, with assistance from the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) will monitor all content on all IA social media outlets and remove any content that is inappropriate.

The following approval process must be completed for IA offices seeking a social media presence:

- 1) Complete the [Social Media Request Form](#).
- 2) Include specific reasons and/or requirements explaining why the requesting office seeks to use social media.
- 3) Provide names, phone numbers, and email addresses for those individuals who will be designated as administrators for the social media platforms requested.
- 4) Email the completed [Social Media Request Form](#) to the BIA Web Team at webteam@bia.gov and CC the Public Affairs office at AS-IA_OPA@bia.gov.
- 5) Since OPA has been designated as the social media point of contact by DOI, OPA has final approval authority for all requests. The BIA Web Team will coordinate with OPA to aid in the approval process.

Once OPA has approved an IA office request for a social media platform, the office should:

- 1) Contact the BIA Web Team at webteam@bia.gov to define requirements.
- 2) Schedule a social media training session with the BIA Web Team.
- 3) Develop a social media guidance manual at the office level if necessary.
- 4) Work with the BIA Web Team to determine proper naming conventions and email addresses to be used for the new social media instance as defined in the next steps.
- 5) **Naming Conventions.** For every social media account created an “IA” or “BIA” must exist in front of the office name (BIA and BIA_ can also be used). For instance, if the Office of the Chief Information Officer had a Facebook and Twitter account, the accounts would be:
 - On Facebook - IA Office of the Chief Information Officer or BIA Office of Justice Services
 - On Twitter - @IA_OCIO or @BIAOJS
- 6) **Email addresses, usernames and passwords.** It is recommended to use a group email address that several employees can use to log into the social media instance if there is more than one content manager. It is also recommended that offices use different work email addresses, usernames and passwords when creating multiple social media accounts. For example, if the Division of Forestry has an account on Facebook, content managers might use chadrick.millenbach@bia.gov and the password B1AF0re8t. However, they might use holly.smithfielder@bia.gov and the password Tw887Tree\$ for their Twitter account, assuming Chadrick Millenbach and Holly Smithfielder are content managers for both accounts. Make sure to get the email address of the main content manager and create the account using only that email. It is also recommended to use a group email address that several employees can use to log into the social media instance if there is more than one content manager.
- 7) **The BIA Web Team will create the social media account.**

Note: According to DOI Social Media Policy – “Any social networking profiles or social media presences that have not been approved via your bureau's point of contact may be terminated.”

Content Management

IA offices/agencies are responsible for establishing, publishing and updating their pages on social media sites via the designated administrators. OPA will monitor content on these pages to ensure: 1) a consistent message is being conveyed and 2) adherence to DOI's Social Media Policy and IA's Social Media Guidelines. OPA also reserves the right to modify social media or direct the offices/agencies to modify content based on best practices.

Employees must remember they are representing Indian Affairs when using their office's social media account. When posting information relevant to Indian Affairs, employees should always use their office's social media account and not their personal pages. For example, OPA advises employees to keep content on their personal Facebook pages separate from content on their IA office page. However, you may choose to "like" an IA office page from your personal Facebook page.

Personal Accounts vs. Official Accounts

IA personnel may not use their personal social media accounts to manage any IA office accounts. Social media accounts may only be authorized for the use of IA offices and not individuals. Thus, IA is not responsible for any social media pages or instances created by its employees for personal use. If an IA employee's personal social media account contains work related content, it may then be considered a federal record based on NARA regulations. Furthermore, OPA has the right to take away administrator privileges from the guilty party to any IA office social media accounts.

Records Management

According to the [NARA Bulletin 2011-02](#):

When using web 2.0/social media platforms, the following non-exhaustive list of questions may help determine record status:

- Is the information unique and not available anywhere else?
- Does it contain evidence of an agency's policies, business, mission, etc.?
- Is this tool being used in relation to the agency's work?
- Is use of the tool authorized by the agency?
- Is there a business need for the information?

If the answers to any of the above questions are yes, then the content is likely to be considered a federal record. However, when agency content is duplicated across multiple platforms or elsewhere in an agency recordkeeping system, the agency may determine that the duplicate content is a non-record.

In accordance with the DOI Social Media Policy, all videos, images, and photographs uploaded to a social media platform such as YouTube or Flickr, must also exist on the IA Internet website at <http://www.indianaffairs.gov>. This creates duplicative information that may not be considered a federal record. If the videos or images are not duplicated on the website, then an office may comply with storing them on a shared drive, internal server, CD, or DVD.

In most cases, information displayed on an IA office Twitter or Facebook account should be duplicated in another public instance whether it is available on another IA social media platform or the IA website.

Thus, making this information a non-federal record. However, if action is taken based on the comments/input provided by the public, a copy of this information must be maintained by the office responsible for the account on at least a temporary basis. NARA stresses in [SF 115 Addendum 1408](#) that all social media records can be kept on a temporary basis, but can also be destroyed if the office no longer needs them. Adherence to court ordered retention rulings is also required.

Responses/Comments

According to [NARA Bulletin 2011-02](#):

*If comments or other postings are inconsistent with an agency's policies, **they may require removal from the platform.** Offices/agencies should remember their First Amendment obligations when drafting policies and moderating content. If necessary, that content may require an approved disposition authority.* The NARA recommends displaying a disclaimer on the social media platform to inform the general public of inappropriate conduct. See the list below.

Citizen Conduct

Users and visitors to IA social media sites shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between IA and the public. Comments or responses made by the public containing any of the following forms of content shall not be tolerated:

- 1) Comments not typically related to the particular social medium article being commented upon.
- 2) Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures.
- 3) Profane language or content.
- 4) Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
- 5) Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- 6) Solicitations of commerce.
- 7) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- 8) Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- 9) Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

The above list must be displayed on the social media platform as content or as a link (in the General Information field of the page). It is recommended that content removed based on these guidelines be retained for federal record-keeping purposes at least temporarily until the office no longer feels it is necessary. Reference the [NARA Social Media Guidance](#) for more information.

Employee Conduct

Employees (including administrators) must adhere to the following rules of conduct when using social media :

- 1) Use every effort to provide factual and accurate information.
- 2) Use every effort to keep interactions factual and accurate and not the opinion of the person posting.

- 3) Only state information on social media sites that is official and intended for the public to view. DO NOT POST ANY INFORMATION THAT MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY, CLASSIFIED OR CONFIDENTIAL.
- 4) Protect privacy and permissions. Never display employee or constituent personally identifiable information (PII). Please refer to the [DOI Social Media Policy](#).
- 5) Do not place advertisements or endorse products or services that are unrelated to official IA business.
- 6) Provide links to credible sources of information.
- 7) Do not place links on social media sites to sources that are unrelated to IA official programs and services.
- 8) Publicly correct any information IA has communicated that is later found to be in error.
- 9) Be honest about IA's relationship, opinions, and identity.
- 10) Never represent yourself when posting content or addressing the public. While utilizing IA-approved social media platforms, you are a federal government employee/representative of IA only.
- 11) Adhere to your office's Social Media Response Chart when you are prompted to address the public. If there is no response chart for your office, please refer to the [DOI Response to Social Media Comments](#) guidance.
- 12) Answer questions from the public in a timely manner.
- 13) Use appropriate and polite behavior when addressing the public. Do not engage in arguments or debates.
- 14) Do not comment on negative opinions by the public if the opinions do not have any reflection on the bureau.
- 15) Do not delete negative comments or opinions provided by the public as freedom of speech is protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
- 16) Strive for transparency and openness in all interactions with the public.
- 17) Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties.
- 18) Respect the rules of the venue.
- 19) MOST IMPORTANTLY – If you have to think about whether or not the content you are about to post is appropriate for public consumption – THEN DO NOT POST IT.

Failure to adhere to these rules may result in OPA revoking administrator access to social media sites as well as deletion of social media sites.

If you encounter comments from other sources on any social media instance, please refer to the [DOI Response to Social Media Comments](#) guidance located at <http://one.doi.net/oneinterior/technology/dwc/index.cfm>.

Security

If your office account is compromised, it is then the responsibility of the IA office to change their username or password or combination of both immediately. Keep record of any compromised activity according to NARA guidelines and then disregard content as needed.

Facebook

Commenting as a Page

Commenting on other IA office Facebook pages is permitted, but you must speak only about your business area and refrain from misrepresenting it. Contribute only factual comments that support BIA's mission. Commenting as an official IA office Facebook page is similar to serving as an official spokesperson for BIA and DOI.

Wall Settings

Site features that allow the public to post on the office page wall must be disabled. However, the public should be able to post comments under wall posts made by the IA office content manager. Only content managers (or OPA) are authorized to post to walls on Facebook pages unless automotive feeds for news or job postings have been set up. Although IA Facebook pages are not typically "open forums", it is recommended to interact with the public and enable them to share comments about topics relevant to Indian Affairs.

Comments

If a Facebook content manager decides to delete a comment made by the public that falls under an inappropriate form of content as defined by the Citizen Conduct on page 4, a screenshot of the topic and the offending comment must be saved for documentation purposes. Content Managers have the ability to block users on Facebook but this is only suggested if a user continuously displays negative comments or negative behavior. Facebook also provides the ability for any page fan to mark any comment as spam. Content Managers are responsible for monitoring pages not only for spam comments, but also for comments that should not be marked as spam if they do not violate the comments policy. If you need assistance, contact OPA.

External Links

Links to other government agencies or media outlets are permitted as long as they are associated to American Indians, Indian tribes, or Alaskan Natives.

Logos

IA Offices can use their own logos as long as they are approved by OPA.

Photos and Multimedia

The use of photos and multimedia is encouraged on social media sites. It is recommended that offices posting photos which include the public, children and IA employees have received proper consent via a consent form. Contact OPA for more information. All videos must be approved by OPA before posting to a Facebook page.

Twitter

Retweeting

Limit retweeting to information from appropriate, credible sources such as other government agencies, authorities/boards/commissions, etc.

Replying

Reply to anyone as needed. Ask other government Twitter accounts to provide answers as needed; otherwise coordinate responses with agencies not on Twitter. Replying through an official account is equivalent to serving as an official online spokesperson for your office, BIA, and DOI.

Following

Only follow select Twitter accounts such as other government agencies. Do not follow individuals such as politicians, celebrities, or athletes. Content managers are not required to follow other twitter accounts just because they are following IA accounts.

Comments

If content managers notice a tweet made by the public that falls under an inappropriate form of content as defined by the Citizen Conduct on page 4, a screenshot of the topic and the offending comment must be saved for documentation purposes. Twitter accounts can only delete their own comments, not anyone else's tweets. It is the content manager's responsibility to delete the account tweet in order to delete the inappropriate tweet and then repost an updated tweet if necessary.

For additional information or questions regarding these Guidelines, please contact:

BIA Web Team

Email: webteam@bia.gov

Office of Public Affairs

Phone: 202-208-3710

Email: AS-IA_OPA@bia.gov