POLICY STATEMENT

Policy No. 2026-01
Adopted: October 20, 2025
By: COMPASS Board of Directors
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COMPASS Social Media Policy

I. Introduction

The role of technology is rapidly changing the way governments interact with their constituents. Social media platforms such as Facebook, X, Instagram, LinkedIn, Nextdoor, and YouTube provide valuable means of sharing information and communicating with residents, augmenting what can be achieved through traditional communication outlets.

This document outlines the social media policy for the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS). This policy is designed to ensure transparency and consistency when incorporating social media into COMPASS' communication and outreach efforts.

Portions of this policy relating to public records, records retention, and employee use of social media are mirrored in other COMPASS policies and procedures regarding these topics.

II. Applicability and Organization

This policy is applicable to users of social media in different capacities, and is organized according to use:

- COMPASS employee use of personal social media (Section III)
- Administrators of COMPASS social media (Section IV)
- Public/third party use of COMPASS social media (Public Terms of Use) (Section V)

Note that applicability is based on the use of social media – different portions of this policy may apply to the same individual under different circumstances. Sections III and IV of this policy (COMPASS Employee Use of Personal Social Media and Administration of COMPASS Social Media) are for internal use only; Section V (Public Terms of Use) applies to public/third party users of COMPASS social media and is clearly posted on the COMPASS web site with the links to COMPASS' social media channels. All use of social media must comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws.

III. COMPASS Employee Use of Personal Social Media

COMPASS employees are expected to observe the following guidelines when using personal social media.

1. Supervisors are strongly discouraged from being "friends" with their subordinates on personal social media sites.

2. COMPASS employees may choose to "like" or "follow" COMPASS on their own personal social media sites, but should not post as "COMPASS" on personal social media sites.
3. When discussing job-related matters on personal social media sites, employees should clearly state that they are not posting as a representative of COMPASS and the opinions expressed on the sites are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of COMPASS.
4. Employees may not post confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information about COMPASS, its member agencies, employees, applicants, consultants, or vendors or post information that is exempt from disclosure under Idaho public records law on personal social media sites.
5. Employees may not post obscenities, slurs, harassment, or personal attacks which may damage or cause harm to COMPASS, its member agencies, employees, applicants, consultants, or vendors.
6. COMPASS may review internet content and use. Policy violations may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.
7. Additional guidelines regarding the use of the internet and agency-supplied technology can be found in the COMPASS Employee Policies and Procedures manual.

IV. Administration of COMPASS Social Media

COMPASS may use a variety of social media platforms to communicate with the public in support of COMPASS' mission.

1. Administration
    i. Only designated administrators of COMPASS social media platforms may post as COMPASS.
    ii. Administrative rights to COMPASS social media platforms are assigned by the Communication Coordinator upon approval of the Executive Director.
    iii. When a social media administrator leaves COMPASS, his/her administrative rights shall be revoked immediately.
2. Content and Use
    i. Social media communication shall comport to the same quality and standards of all other COMPASS communication.
    ii. COMPASS social media sites are to be used to support the mission of COMPASS and its members.
    iii. COMPASS shall strive to make its social media sites accessible to all users.
    iv. Media published to COMPASS social media channels should primarily consist of materials that are created by or for COMPASS or have been purchased by COMPASS. When COMPASS does not own said media, it shall only be published with the consent of the owner. When media is posted on behalf of COMPASS' member agencies, it should be noted as such.
    v. COMPASS shall not benefit monetarily from copyrighted media published to social media platforms.
    vi. COMPASS shall not knowingly post copyrighted material without the owner's consent.

a. If inadvertently published, COMPASS shall remove the material at the request of the owner.

3. Public/Third Party Posts
    i. Should any post be perceived as an imminent threat, COMPASS will take appropriate action, which may include removing the post after screen capture, reporting the post to the host platform, and/or contacting law enforcement.
    ii. COMPASS will endeavor to respond to all legitimate (non-rhetorical) public/third party questions posed on its social media sites.
        a. Responses should be posted within one business day.
            i. When providing a complete answer is not feasible within this time period, COMPASS should, at a minimum, respond to indicate the question was received and an answer is forthcoming.
        b. Responses should be provided in the same manner as the question was submitted; that is, questions posed publicly should be responded to publicly and questions posed via private message should be responded to via private message.
    iii. COMPASS will not delete or hide comments posted by others unless they specifically violate the terms of this policy.
    iv. If a post is believed to contain harmful malware or phishing links or to be an Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated spam/bot post, COMPASS may choose to not engage with the post and/or state that it is believed to be spam, as appropriate.
    v. If a post is definitively known to contain harmful malware or phishing links or to be an AI generated spam/bot post, COMPASS may choose to delete the post, not engage with the post, and/or state that it is believed to be spam, as appropriate.
4. Public Records
    i. All COMPASS communication, including social media content, is subject to Idaho public records laws and must be managed in compliance with applicable laws and COMPASS' public records policy.
5. Records Retention
    i. COMPASS social media posts and posts by the public/third parties on COMPASS social media pages should be retained on the platform in which they were posted, subject to limitations established by each platform, except as noted below.
    ii. COMPASS is not responsible for retention of public/third party posts if such posts are removed or changed by anyone other than COMPASS.
    iii. COMPASS may remove or change its own social media posts if a post is posted in error, contains erroneous information, or otherwise violates COMPASS' communication standards.
        a. COMPASS posts that are removed or changed should be preserved following the procedure below (5.v).

b. Recordings of COMPASS Board of Directors' and committee meetings will be retained following COMPASS' Records Retention Policy. Any deletion of these recordings is exempt from the preservation procedure outlined in 5.v.

iv. Removal of, or changes to, third-party social media posts

a. COMPASS may remove public/third-party posts if such posts violate COMPASS' social media Public Terms of Use (pages 5/6).

b. Social media administrator(s) shall bring any post believed to violate COMPASS' social media Public Terms of Use to the attention of the COMPASS Executive Director, noting specifically what term it is believed has been violated and in what way, with a recommendation for action, if any.

c. Once presented with this information, the COMPASS Executive Director is responsible for determining action (if any) regarding a violation of the Terms of Use; if the Executive Director is not available, responsibility is delegated to the Communication Coordinator.

d. Public/third party posts that are removed by COMPASS should be preserved following the procedure below (5.v).

v. Prior to removing a COMPASS or public/third party post or changing a COMPASS post, the administrator should:

a. Take a screenshot of the post to be removed or changed and save it under the appropriate fiscal year within T:\Permanent\Social Media.

b. Record the following in T:\Permanent\Social Media\Removed Social Media Posts.xlsx.

- Social media platform
- Whether it is a COMPASS post or a public/third party post
- Name of individual who posted the material
- Name of individual who removed or changed the material
- Date/time of original post
- Date/time of change or removal
- Reason for change or removal (cite Public Terms of Use as appropriate)
- If a change (COMPASS posts only), exactly what was changed
- Additional notes (e.g., note if the individual has had posts removed before)
- Thumbnail picture of screen shot
- Link to file of screen shot

vi. Documentation of removed or changed posts should be retained for five years, subject to disposal at the end of the fifth fiscal year.

6. Termination of Use of Social Media Platforms

i. Should COMPASS determine that a particular social media platform no longer serves the interests of the agency, COMPASS may terminate use of that platform; when this is the case, COMPASS should do the following:

a. Remove links to the platform from COMPASS materials.

b. Keep the COMPASS username (handle) on that platform to ensure it is not taken by another party.
c. Note on the platform that COMPASS is no longer active on that platform; link to the COMPASS website.
d. Keep notifications from the platform active, to be aware if other parties post to a COMPASS page.

7. Social Media Platform Terms of Service
   i. Posts on COMPASS social media pages are subject to each platform's individual terms of service and may be removed by that platform if found to be in violation of those terms.

V. Public/Third Party Use of COMPASS Social Media (Public Terms of Use)

COMPASS encourages the public to engage with COMPASS via its social media sites. The use of COMPASS social media sites is subject to the following disclaimers and Public Terms of Use.

1. Disclaimers
   i. COMPASS social media sites are continually updated and may not be free from error.
   ii. Activity on or by COMPASS on its social media sites (e.g., links, shares, likes) does not constitute an endorsement by COMPASS.
   iii. COMPASS may publish comments received during public comment periods. These comments are submitted by members of the public and do not reflect COMPASS' views or policies on the topics discussed.
2. Public Record
   i. Posts made to COMPASS social media pages, including posts by the public/third parties, are considered public records and as such are subject to public records requests in compliance with public records laws.
   ii. Social media should not be used to submit a public records request; public records requests should be submitted using the public records request form on COMPASS' web site at https://compassidaho.org/request-for-public-records.
3. Record Retention
   i. COMPASS social media posts and posts by the public/third parties on COMPASS social media pages should be retained on the platform in which they were posted, subject to limitations established by each platform, except as noted below.
   ii. COMPASS is not responsible for retention of public/third party posts if such posts are removed or changed by anyone other than COMPASS.
   iii. Removal of, or changes to, COMPASS social media posts
      a. COMPASS may remove or change its own social media posts if a post is posted in error, contains erroneous information, or otherwise violates COMPASS' communication standards.

b. Recordings of COMPASS Board of Directors' and committee meetings will be retained following COMPASS' Records Retention Policy. Any deletion of these recordings is exempt from the preservation procedure outlined in 5.v.

c. COMPASS posts that are removed or changed should be preserved, with the exception of meeting recordings as noted in 3.iii.b.

iv. Removal of, or changes to, public/third party social media posts

a. COMPASS may remove public/third party posts if such posts violate COMPASS' social media Public Terms of Use.

b. Third party posts that are removed by COMPASS should be preserved.

4. Public Dialogue

i. Comments and questions are encouraged on COMPASS social media sites.

ii. Comments submitted on social media sites are not considered official "public comments" on COMPASS plans or programs; official public comments should be emailed to COMPASS at info@compassidaho.org or submitted per instructions as posted on the COMPASS website (https://compassidaho.org/) during official public comment periods.

5. Public/Third Party Use of COMPASS Social Media Sites

i. All content posted on COMPASS social media sites is subject to monitoring.

ii. The following types of content are not allowed on COMPASS social media sites and are subject to removal:

a. Conduct that violates federal or state laws, including threats of violence, as defined by law

b. Content that promotes or encourages illegal activity

c. Content that is confidential in nature, defined as exempt from disclosure under the Idaho Public Records Act (https://legislature.idaho.gov/statutesrules/idstat/title74/t74ch1/)

d. Content that violates copyright law or other legal ownership

e. Comments in support of or in opposition to any personal political campaign

f. Photos or videos containing recognizable individuals, except when posted by COMPASS

g. Defamation of any individual, as defined by law

h. Links to commercial third-party web pages or email addresses

i. Harmful malware or phishing links

j. AI generated spam/bot posts

ii. Content that violates these terms is subject to removal

a. If content is removed, it will be retained by COMPASS for five fiscal years from the date of the end of COMPASS' fiscal year (September 30).

iii. Contest removal of content

a. A user may contest the removal of his/her content by contacting COMPASS at info@compassidaho.org. The determination of whether to remove content from COMPASS social media platforms rests solely at the discretion of COMPASS, following the guidance outlined in this policy.

6. Social Media Platform Terms of Service
    i. Posts on COMPASS social media pages are subject to each platform's individual terms of service and may be removed by that platform if found to be in violation of those terms.

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