

**RCCD**

**RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE DISTRICT**



# **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

**Produced by  
The External Relations & Strategic Communications Department  
in Cooperation with  
The District's Marketing and Communications Committee**

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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines for the use of social media by constituents of the Riverside Community College District (RCCD or District), including students, faculty, administrators, classified professionals, and members of the public. These guidelines reflect the [vision, mission, and values](#) of RCCD and are intended to enhance communication and add value to the District's community.

RCCD recognizes the importance of social media as a powerful vehicle to communicate with our community, disseminate relevant news, listen to public voices, and monitor perceptions of the District and its colleges, engage with our constituents, and build goodwill.

RCCD is committed to promoting a free and open exchange of ideas. The District supports core values of free speech and academic freedom and encourages responsible use of social media in a manner that does not violate these rights.

These guidelines serve as a supplement to existing RCCD policies and regulations and should be read in conjunction with those policies. This is intended to be a living document and is reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the evolving nature of social media. Constituents are encouraged to check the [RCCD social media website](#) for updates.

If you have questions about this document, please contact the RCCD Executive Director, External Relations & Strategic Communications.

## College Social Media Guidelines

Each college will create and publish a Social Media Guidelines with specific procedures for the development and administration of social media accounts within their college community, and will identify the individual or position at the college who is responsible for those processes. These Social Media Guidelines will use language and terminology consistent with this document.

## Definitions

**Social media** refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

**Content** is defined within this guide as any form of communicative material posted or exchanged via social media platforms. This includes, but is not limited to, written copy, photos, graphics, videos, live-video streams, comments, etc.

## **Official Social Media Accounts**

The use of social media by RCCD and its colleges serves a variety of official communications, business, educational, research, service, operational, safety, marketing, and management purposes.

Official social media accounts are channels authorized to represent RCCD, its colleges, programs, departments, offices, or other official entity within RCCD. These channels and those managing or contributing to the channels are publicly perceived as authorized representatives of those entities.

The creation and administration of official social media accounts must be authorized by the District or college. To ensure proper maintenance and oversight, all official social media accounts must be managed by an RCCD employee.

Refer to each college's social media guidelines for specific procedures for creating, registering, and managing official social media accounts.

Official social media accounts must operate in accordance with all state and federal laws, District policies, regulations, and guidelines. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in revocation of social media privileges.

## **Student Clubs and Organizations**

Student clubs and organizations are groups that are officially chartered and approved by the college or the college's Associated Students, whose active membership is limited to current students and has at least one advisor who is a current full-time faculty member. Only approved, chartered student clubs and organizations are allowed to use the college's name, logo, or brand identity.

Student clubs and organizations must abide by college and RCCD policies, regulations, and guidelines for ethical and responsible use of social media and must comply with all state and federal laws, including those related to intellectual property and copyright. Student clubs & organizations are responsible for the content of their social media accounts and must ensure that all posts and comments are respectful and adhere to appropriate standards of privacy and confidentiality.

Refer to the college's social media guidelines for specific procedures for creating, registering, and managing student clubs and organizations social media accounts. The club's faculty advisor must maintain administrative access to the club's social media accounts and is responsible for it abiding by RCCD policies and regulations.

Student clubs and organizations must ensure that their social media accounts are secure, and that usernames and passwords are protected. Any misuse or abuse of social media must be promptly reported (see the college's social media guidelines for specific procedures).

## Use of District or College Identity

Only official District or college social media accounts and student clubs & organizations are authorized to use the District or college name, address, logo, seal, or identity ([Board Policy 1000](#)). The use of the District or college identity by nonofficial social media accounts is strictly prohibited.

## Public Comments

Riverside Community College District welcomes the exchange of ideas and interactions made possible through social media. However, content and public comments made through any social media platform do not reflect the opinion or position of RCCD, its Board of Trustees, its colleges, students, faculty, or staff.

Links to other websites are not an endorsement from the District, colleges, or any institutional office or individual (altogether “RCCD Parties”), all of whom do not guarantee the content or validity of such sites, and users follow links at their own discretion.

## Inappropriate Content

It is important to understand what is considered inappropriate content on social media, and it is essential to adhere to the guidelines set forth by RCCD to ensure responsible use.

Conducting official RCCD business on unofficial social media accounts is not authorized as an official means of communication. Instead, all official communication should be done through official social media accounts to ensure accuracy and security.

- Political activities or opinions - Official social media accounts may not be used for political activities, including, but not limited to, urging the passage or defeat of any ballot measure or candidate. (See [Board Policy 1716](#))
- Disclosure of confidential or privileged information - Posting confidential information, such as that which is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA), or District policies, is strictly prohibited. This information should always be kept secure and not shared publicly on any social media platform.
- Violations of codes of conduct - Violating the employee or student code of conduct, such as harassing or bullying others, is not tolerated. This includes posting content that promotes discrimination, hate speech, or otherwise violates the District's harassment policy. (See [Board Policy 6430](#))

- Copyright or intellectual property laws and policy - Posting content that violates copyright policy, such as sharing copyrighted materials without permission, is also prohibited. It is essential to respect the rights of others and only share content that you have the right to use. See [Board Policy 3750](#) for use of copyrighted material.
- Engaging on controversial topics and unprofessional behavior - When posting or responding to “controversial” topics, exercise restraint and caution. Ensure that all communications reflect positively on the credibility of the institution. Contact the college’s Public Affairs Officer or the Executive Director of External Relations & Strategic Communications for assistance with communicating controversial topics.
- Spam posts/comments - all accounts should abide by each social media platform’s terms of use.

All official social media content is subject to review by District and college representatives, and, if deemed inappropriate or threatening, the District reserves the right to remove and/or report such postings to RCCD authorities who will process these communications under the appropriate codes, policies, or procedures, or through law enforcement. Comments about bullying, guns, bombs or other violent acts or language will be taken seriously.

## Best Practices

When posting on social media it is important to ensure that all content is current, accurate, and respectful. The goal of social media is to add value and enhance communication, so it is important to consider the audience and think before posting.

**Be Active.** Official social media accounts should be checked daily, and new content posted at least once a week. Respond quickly to questions and comments.

**Be Visual.** Users are drawn to visually appealing posts. Be sure to highlight photos and other visual elements in posts. As much as possible, limit the amount of text on images.

**Be Recognizable and Professional.** RCCD and its colleges have developed Brand Guidelines to assist in maintaining a consistent and professional visual identity. Utilize the brand guidelines for logos, colors, and font usage.

- RCCD – [rccd.edu/brand](http://rccd.edu/brand)
- MVC – [mvc.edu/brand](http://mvc.edu/brand)
- NC – [norcocollege.edu/brand](http://norcocollege.edu/brand)
- RCC – [rcc.edu/brand](http://rcc.edu/brand)

Additionally, write and speak clearly without errors. The RCCD Writing Style Guide is the approved standard for public written communications.

**Maintain confidentiality** when posting on social media. All information shared must comply with all privacy laws and protect individuals' personal information (see [Board Policy 3040](#)).

**Social media is public**, and content should be consistent with how you wish to present yourself or the institution to colleagues, students, and community members.

**Controversial Topics:** When posting or responding to politically, emotionally, or socially charged topics, exercise restraint and caution. Contact the college's Public Affairs Officer or the Executive Director of External Relations & Strategic Communications to ensure that all communications reflect positively on the credibility of the institution.

**Inactive Accounts:** Social media accounts that are inactive for more than one year should be deleted.