

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
MANUAL SERIES



DLMS 5 – INFORMATION

DEPARTMENTAL_X__

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Chapter Reference: DLMS 5 – Chapter 600, "DOL Social Media Policy"

Nature of Revisions: The desire for open government and transparency is driving U.S. Federal Agencies, including Department of Labor (DOL), to enhance communication, information dissemination, collaboration, and information exchange in support of their missions through the use of Social Media. The Deputy Secretary of Labor assigned the Office of Public Affairs (OPA) the responsibility for leadership and management of Social Media. This chapter establishes policy and assigns organizational and management responsibilities for the use of Social Media by the DOL.

Action Required:

X Please post this new chapter on LaborNet under the appropriate sequence with all other Information chapters.

Approval for Issuance and Distribution:

T. MICHAEL KERR
Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management

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CHAPTER 600 – DEPARTMENT OF LABOR USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

601 **Purpose.** This document establishes policy and assigns organizational and management responsibilities for the official use of Social Media within the Department of Labor (DOL).

602 **Scope & Applicability.**

- A. This policy (Policy) governs all official use of Social Media tools (“tools”) by or on behalf of DOL and/or its component agencies and offices (“DOL components”):
- (1) by DOL agency heads and by agency employee(s);
 - (2) irrespective of whether use of the tool commenced prior to or following the issuance date of this chapter;
 - (3) irrespective of whether the intended audience is internal or external to one or more DOL components; and
 - (4) irrespective of whether the tool is co-sponsored or hosted by another DOL component, another Federal or governmental agency, or (by appropriate approval) a non-Governmental entity.
- B. This Policy does not establish requirements or procedures for the withholding or disclosure of sensitive data in litigation, under various statutes, or in response to court/tribunal requirements or orders, or congressional requests.
- C. Nothing in this Chapter shall contravene nor interfere with the authorities and responsibilities of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) by the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, or Secretary’s Order 04-2006.
- D. A Social Media Handbook will be established and maintained by the Agency Head of the Office of Public Affairs to provide the procedures for the practical application of this Policy and will be located on LaborNet. The Handbook will be updated as appropriate, but will be reviewed annually with a refreshed issuance date by the Agency Head of the Office of Public Affairs (OPA). The Handbook, and its updates, will be reviewed by all affected DOL agency heads and cleared by the Office of the Solicitor (SOL) and will contain, among other provisions, the following sections:

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- (1) delineation of authorities and responsibilities retained by OPA and those delegated and assigned to the respective DOL components in connection with the implementation of this Policy;
- (2) identification of legal authorities and Federal laws and directives that actually or potentially restrict the government’s utilization of Social Media tools;
- (3) identification of OPA-approved tools and the application procedures for their use;
- (4) the procedures, justifications, forms, signature levels, and clearances required for obtaining and maintaining OPA, Office of Management and Budget, and other approvals associated with the use of such tools;
- (5) operational requirements and criteria for continuing and for terminating the use of such tools; and
- (6) specification of applicable information collection, recordkeeping, records management, and reporting requirements.

603 **Background.** The President’s memorandum on “Transparency and Open Government” (January 21, 2009) instructs Federal agencies to use new technologies to enhance agencies’ communication, information dissemination, collaboration, and information exchange with the public in support of creating an “unprecedented level of openness in Government.” DOL fully embraces the President’s direction, including with respect to audiences within the Department.

604 **Definitions.**

- A. **Official Use.** An activity that is conducted for the purpose of accomplishing an official, or otherwise authorized, DOL duty or activity.
- B. **Social Media.** An umbrella term that encompasses the various activities that integrate technology, user interaction, and content creation and dissemination. Social Media use many technologies and forms, such as blogs, wikis, photo and video sharing, podcasts, social networking, mashups, and virtual worlds.

605 **Statements of Policy.**

- A. All uses of Social Media by the Department of Labor shall:

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- (1) support the Department’s mission and programs;
- (2) undergo initial and regularly recurring reviews relating to the measurement of benefits and costs, the effectiveness of internal controls, and the application of principles of continuous improvement;
- (3) comply with current Federal laws and other legal authorities, DOL policies and directives, and applicable Standards of Ethical Conduct for Executive Branch Employees;
- (4) be subject to suspension or be suspended in relation to the use of specific Social Media tools in the event of misuse or if any published content or the tool itself fails to conform with this Policy or violates any applicable law; and
- (5) be pursuant to terms of service agreements and other contracts approved for acceptance by Federal agencies.

606 Social Media Tools.

DOL encourages the use of Social Media technologies to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of DOL’s mission. By openly sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned within the agency, with and from other Federal, state, and local partners, and with and from the public, DOL and all of its component agencies can provide more effective solutions and efficiencies to enhance excellence in the business of government.

Public Tools

Governance of the utilization of Department of Labor Social Media tools which are visible to the public shall be based upon the following principles:

- (1) Agency Heads are encouraged to incorporate the use of Social Media tools into their ongoing public communications strategies to meet the mission of the Department;

Internal Tools

Governance of the utilization of Department of Labor Social Media tools which are only visible to a DOL Component or multiple DOL Components shall be based upon the following principles:

- (1) Agency Heads are encouraged to explore the use of internal Social Media tools to meet their Agency’s mission;

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(2) The use of, and the content for, all public Social Media tools must be approved by the Agency Head of OPA;

(2) In order to ensure consistency, and avoid duplication of platforms and services, Agency Head requests for the use of internal Social Media tools must be approved by the Agency Head of OPA;

(3) OPA Agency Head approval or disapproval of the Agency Head requests, including the use of existing tools and the nomination of additional tools, shall be based upon criteria published in the above-referenced Social Media Handbook; The OPA Agency Head has the sole DOL-wide responsibility for publishing all content, using approved tools;

(3) Criteria for approval or disapproval of Agency requests shall be based upon criteria published in the DOL Social Media Handbook. OPA will designate the tools Agency use;

(4) In addition to publishing content, the OPA Agency Head shall oversee the subsequent utilization of Social Media tools to ensure on-going responsiveness and public engagement. A Social Media Coordinator may be designated directly by the OPA Agency Head to perform these duties on behalf of the OPA Agency Head;

(4) Upon approval of an Agency Head's request and internal control plan, the OPA Agency Head's authority to publish content using approved tools may be re-delegated to Agency Heads. Such re-delegations shall be accompanied by assigning responsibility to Agency Heads to administer and monitor the subsequent utilization of the Social Media tool in order to ensure on-going responsiveness and user engagement;

(5) Agency Heads may nominate additional tools for adoption and use by the Department via a standard form for OPA Agency Head approval;

(5) Even in the event of such re-delegation, the OPA Agency Head shall retain overall authority and responsibility for the administration and monitoring of internal tools;

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(6) The OPA Agency Head shall assure that all stages in the initiation, content development, and utilization of Social Media tools, whether within OPA or, if delegated, by DOL’s component agencies, are performed under continuous management and control of DOL employees appropriately familiar with relevant agency programs, laws, and policies, and adequately and regularly trained in compliance with all Federal laws and directives that restrict or otherwise bear upon the government’s utilization of Social Media tools; however, final review and final approval for publication or dissemination of all information, documentation, and replies, irrespective of whether primarily of a policy or informational nature, must be performed by the OPA Agency Head or other Federal employee trained and so familiar that is designated by the Agency Head directly (without authority to redelegate) and in writing.

(7) No individual may add, modify, or delete publicly-accessible content:

(a) except as a consequence of a written designation by the OPA Agency Head of specified eligible OPA employee(s) performing such tasks;

(b) except as a consequence of a written delegation by the OPA Agency Head to the agency head of the DOL component agency and an accompanying written designation by the respective DOL component agency head of such component agency

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(7) No individual may add, modify, or delete internal content:

(a) except as a consequence of a written designation by the OPA Agency Head of specified eligible OPA employee(s) performing such tasks;

(b) except as a consequence of a written delegation by the OPA Agency Head to the agency head of the DOL component agency and an accompanying written designation by the respective DOL component agency head of such component agency

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employees eligible to perform such tasks on behalf of such component Agency Head; or

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(c) except that individual off-duty DOL employees shall have access to add suitable content in accordance with the rules established for employee access for the particular tool.

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Provided that such written designations and delegations issued prior to July 31 shall expire on September 30 of such year.

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(8) In all cases, OPA reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that fails to meet the criteria of this Policy or violates any applicable law. In the event that OPA must take these steps, OPA shall inform the Agency Head immediately that such action is being taken and the specific reason(s) for any such action.

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607 Authorities and Responsibilities.

A. The **OPA Agency Head** is delegated overall authority and assigned overall responsibility for the implementation of Social Media in DOL in accordance with the principles contained in this policy. The OPA Agency Head shall:

(1) Provide consultation and assistance to DOL Components in the utilization or implementation of Department approved Social Media tools;

(2) Establish, chair, consult, and coordinate with a Social Media Governance Workgroup composed of Departmental Management Representatives from OPA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, and Office of the Solicitor in carrying out the related authorities and responsibilities for governance of Social Media;

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- (3) Grant waivers to DOL component Agency Heads as necessary on a case-by-case basis such that:
 - (a) the specific waiver supports the combined missions of the Department and the individual agency; and
 - (b) the waivers are limited in scope and fashioned narrowly to accommodate demonstrated need; and
 - (c) the waivers are limited in duration to the earlier of a date determined by the OPA Agency Head or the actual incumbency of the component agency head or the completion of incumbency of the Secretary's four-year term; and
 - (d) the waivers, as written and as construed, must preserve controls established in Paragraph 606 that, where applicable, require direct (without authority to redelegate) and expiring written designations by component agency heads of the agency's employees authorized to add, modify, or delete content on behalf of the component Agency Head.
 - (e) the authority of the OPA Agency Head to grant such waivers cannot be re-delegated.
- (4) Establish, maintain and update the social media handbook as appropriate, but at least review with a refreshed issuance date annually; and
- (5) Develop through such Handbook:
 - (a) standards, plans, procedures, internal controls, and guidance on prerequisite approvals within and outside DOL for the activation and deactivation of social media tools and accounts; and the development, posting, maintenance, and removal of content in the Department's implementation of Social Media; and
 - (b) procedures and processes to ensure that all such information that is disseminated, transmitted, and stored, via Social Media, is retained in accordance with applicable law and safeguarded against unauthorized access, use, modification, or destruction, through the integration of management, operational, and technical controls.

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- (6) Issue implementation directives in support of such Handbook following full and open coordination and consultation with relevant Agency representatives.
- (7) Collect pertinent data and prepare accurate and meaningful reports and recommendations as may be requested or required for the effective review, management, and independent evaluation of the DOL Social Media program.
- (8) Maintain current and historical lists of approved, active, and terminated Social Media tools and the DOL Agency contacts and designees.
- (9) Monitor, in coordination with the respective Agency contacts and designees, all DOL Social Media activities to ensure adherence to this policy for appropriate use, consistency with DOL's mission, and the establishment and maintenance of effective internal controls; and
- (10) Perform these duties with full cognizance of and in compliance with all applicable laws.

B. Agency Heads shall, as further delineated by the Agency Head of OPA in the Social Media Handbook:

- (1) Identify strategies for incorporating the use of approved Social Media tools into Agency communications, outreach, and project plans.
- (2) Identify and seek OPA approval for the use of Department approved public and internal Social Media tools determined to be worthy and eligible for agency use.
- (3) Prepare and submit for the approval of Agency Head of OPA internal control plans as required to obtain authority re-delegated to publish content using pre-approved internal Social Media tools.
- (4) Identify and nominate for OPA approval specific additional Social Media tools determined to be appropriate and eligible for agency use.
- (5) Produce accurate, clear, and permissible content to be published using Social Media tools and monitor that use and all ensuing content.

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- (6) Monitor the timeliness, quality, and public engagement in relation to the content contributed by the respective agency.
- (7) Review the draft Social Media Handbook and revisions thereof.
- C. The Solicitor of Labor (SOL)** is responsible for providing legal advice, assistance, and review of governance documents and activities under this Policy.
- D. The Chief Information Officer (CIO)** is responsible for providing advice, guidance, and assistance related to Information Technology (IT) Security; Privacy; Personally Identifiable Information (PII) protection; the creation, maintenance, use, and disposition of Federal records; the Paperwork Reduction Act; Enterprise Architecture; and other areas covered or arising under this Policy.