FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT
Humboldt County Children and Families Commission
Social Media Policy

Effective Date: January 16, 2014

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The Humboldt County Children and Families Commission believes that social media is a valuable resource with the potential to expand the Commission's ability to educate and connect with members of the Humboldt County community. Nevertheless, the technology brings an openness that is new to many organizations, and frequently invites a dramatic shift in communication style. The purpose of this policy is to provide a structure that will allow FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT representatives and third-party associates to participate safely and effectively in the fast-changing landscape of social media on the Internet.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

2.1. The policy applies to all representatives of FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT when communicating on behalf of the Commission.

2.2. Grantees fulfilling obligations through executed agreements with FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT must agree to abide by the posting guidelines described in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this Policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

1.1 FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT Representatives are (but are not limited to) Commissioners, Commission staff, and contracted consultants for the Commissioners.

1.2 A social media account is any on-line (Internet) communication tool designed to:

1.2.1 Assist with FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT program implementation.

1.2.2 Assist with public education specific to children age 0-5 and their families.

4. MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

4.1. All social media accounts must be approved by the Executive Committee before they are created. Responsibility for management of FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT social media accounts will be assigned by the Executive Director.

5. POSTING RULES

5.1. Postings must not violate any federal, state, or municipal laws. They must not:

5.1.1. Violate rights of trademark or copyright holders, including use of non-public text, images, etc.;

5.1.2. Reveal information about ongoing investigations;

5.1.3. Circumvent public record laws.

5.2. Postings must maintain professionalism by:

5.2.1. Identifying FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT by name whenever posting on behalf of the commission.

5.2.2. Using only appropriate language that is not foul, derogatory, disrespectful, inaccurate, or threatening.

5.2.3. Using social media in a productive and informative manner.

5.2.4. Being aware that what is written or posted by way of photographs or audio files will reflect on the Humboldt County Children and Families Commission; and use caution and care so that no use of social media results in damage to the organization or reputation of FIRST 5 HUMBOLT.

5.2.5. Not providing, or publishing confidential material, or using such material as part of any posting.

5.2.6. Not commenting on a community partner's practices.

5.2.7. Not providing information relating to pending grant decisions, or other policy matters that could compromise negotiations between FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT and third party entities.

5.2.8. Be aware that all content added to a social media site is subject to open records laws and discovery rules in legal cases.

5.2.9. Be aware of the wide accessibility and the potential for long-term publicity of online posts.

5.2.10. Do not direct online users to sites that are not viable, ethical, legal, and moral, or sites that would violate any administrative directives, such as those for political activity, fraud, waste, or abuse.

5.3. Content Guidelines

5.3.1. Ensure that postings deliver a message that is consistent with FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT goals and directives, especially the four focus areas of Child Health, Family Strengthening, Early Childhood Care & Education, and Systems Integration.

5.3.2. The Commission may approve endorsements of products or commercial enterprises (movie, books, activity) ONLY under exceptional circumstances (the content should be newsworthy, essential to one of our four focus areas, and not cost prohibitive). Representatives must apply directly to the Executive Director for permission to endorse a product or enterprise.

5.3.3. Whenever possible, use social media to direct traffic to our primary website—www.first5humboldt.org

5.3.4. Promote FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT by finding and sharing information that is interesting and helpful to our followers. If possible, encourage them to share with their network and provide an example of how to do this.

5.3.5. As a FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT representative, be cognizant of the fact that you are part of the Commission's brand, therefore be sure that what you post is related to FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT's work and is not controversial. If there is uncertainty, discuss with the Executive Director.

5.3.6. FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT's audience is comprised of stakeholders, politicians, and grantees. Communication should be clear, accurate, and useful.

5.3.7. Maintain correct punctuation and grammatical usage and proofread postings to eliminate misspellings.

5.4. Managing Comments.

5.4.1. Positive comments should be noted and archived.

5.4.2. Misinformed comments should be politely corrected.

5.4.3. Critical comments that don't merit correction should be ignored.

5.4.4. Vulgar or extremely off-topic comments should be removed.

5.4.5. Don't remove a post just because it is critical or misinformed. It's an opportunity to educate.

5.4.6. Think before responding to hate-speech or negative comments. For FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT Representatives, discuss with the Executive Director before taking action.

6. SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1. All social media sites are the property of the Humboldt County Children and Families Commission. All User IDs and passwords must be disclosed to the Executive Director.

6.2. FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT representatives may not neglect or abuse their social media accounts. Accounts must be monitored a minimum of once a week, and any breaches must be reported within 24 hours of discovery.

6.3. FIRST 5 HUMBOLDT representatives and grantees must be mindful to prevent fraud and unauthorized access to accounts, and preserve the confidentiality of access passwords.

References

-County of Humboldt, Social Media Policy, 2012.
-First 5 Fresno County, Internal Social Media Guidelines, 2012.
-First 5 Ventura County, Social Media Guidelines, 2011.