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SOUTHERN PARK COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Guffey, Colorado • Established 1987

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POLICY NO. 200-2.09

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY — ALL PERSONNEL

Southern Park County Fire Protection District • Series 200 — Governance & Administration

Policy Number:	200-2.09	Document Number:	20260408_ADMIN_200-2.09_SocialMediaPolicy_DRAFT-v0.4
Effective Date:	May 12, 2026	Adopted:	May 12, 2026
Reviewed / Revised:	—	Next Review:	Annual — Q1 each year
Approved By:	Board of Directors, SPCFPD	Classification:	PUBLIC POLICY DOCUMENT
Supersedes:	None — new policy. Social media conduct provisions previously embedded in Policy 200-2.01 §§ 4.10 and 4.12 are supplemented and expanded here. BAM § 9.1.3 governs Directors; this policy applies at all-personnel level.		
Cross-References:	BAM v1.1 (§ 9.1.3) • Policy 200-2.01 (Code of Ethics §§ 4.10, 4.12) • Policy 200-2.04 (Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure § 6.d) • Policy 200-2.10 (Community Engagement and Public Education) • Policy 300-3.13 (Progressive Discipline — pending) • HIPAA 45 C.F.R. Parts 160, 164 • C.R.S. § 24-18-101 et seq. (Colorado Government Ethics Act) • C.R.S. § 13-21-611 (Colorado Cyberbullying statute)		

1. PURPOSE

Social media is a powerful tool for community connection, public education, and timely communication. It is also a source of reputational, operational, legal, and safety risks when used carelessly in connection with District activities. This policy establishes the standards governing all social media use — personal and official — that involves or affects the Southern Park County Fire Protection District.

Relationship to other policies. BAM v1.1 § 9.1.3 establishes Director-specific social media conduct standards and controls for Directors in their governance role. Policy 200-2.01 §§ 4.10 and 4.12 establish social media as enforceable conduct principles for all personnel. Policy 200-2.04 § 6.d prohibits disclosure of confidential information through social media. This policy provides the definitions, scope framework, and operative rules that implement all three. In any conflict with BAM § 9.1.3 as applied to Director governance conduct, the BAM controls.



2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all persons associated with the District in any capacity, including all Directors, the District Chief and all paid staff, all active volunteers and reserves, contractors acting on behalf of the District, and auxiliary members. It applies to all social media use — on any device, personal or District-owned — that involves District-related content as defined in § 3.

This policy governs three distinct contexts, which carry different levels of restriction:

Personal accounts, non-District topics. Personal social media activity that does not involve or reference the District, District personnel, District operations, or District-related matters is generally not regulated by this policy. The District respects the personal lives and free expression of its members when they are not acting in or referencing their District role.

“District-Related Content.” Any social media content — text, image, video, audio, link, or emoji — that: (a) identifies or clearly implies the author’s role as a District employee, officer, or volunteer; (b) is posted using a District-affiliated account or platform; (c) purports to represent an official District position or action; or (d) directly involves or identifies District-specific resources, personnel, incidents, or facilities by name or other clear identifier, regardless of whether the author’s District role is stated. Content that an objective observer would not connect to the author’s District role is not District-Related Content under this policy.

Official District accounts. Social media accounts, pages, channels, or profiles operated in the name of, or on behalf of, the Southern Park County Fire Protection District are governed by § 7 of this policy. Only authorized personnel may post on official District accounts.

3. DEFINITIONS

“Social Media.” Any internet-based platform, application, or service that enables users to create, share, or interact with content, including without limitation: Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Nextdoor, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, Reddit, community email lists and listservs, online neighborhood forums, personal blogs and podcasts, and any successor or equivalent platforms. The definition is intentionally broad and technology-neutral; new platforms are covered by this policy as they emerge.

“District-Related Content.” Any social media content — text, image, video, audio, link, or emoji — that references, depicts, or could reasonably be understood as relating to: the District, its station, apparatus, or personnel; District operations, incidents, or calls; District policies, decisions, or governance matters; patients or victims served by the District; or the fire service in southern Park County. Content is District-related even if the District is not named explicitly, if a reasonable person familiar with the District would recognize the connection.

“Official District Account.” A social media account, page, channel, or profile that is operated in the name of the Southern Park County Fire Protection District, or that a reasonable person would understand as representing the District officially.

“Personal Account.” A social media account operated by an individual in their own name or personal identity, not in the name of the District. A personal account does not become an official District account solely because its operator is District personnel.

“Authorized Spokesperson.” A person expressly authorized by the Board Chair (for governance matters) or the District Chief (for operational matters) to make public statements on behalf of the District. Only authorized spokespeople may post on official District accounts or represent District positions publicly.

“Incident Media.” Photographs, video, audio recordings, or other recordings made at or near an emergency incident scene, including scenes of fire, medical emergencies, accidents, rescues, or other events to which the District responded. See also “Incident Information,” defined in Policy 200-2.14 § 3, which governs factual information releases about incidents to media and the public.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The following principles apply to all social media use governed by this policy. They reflect the District’s commitment to professional conduct, community trust, operational safety, and the legal obligations that apply to a public safety agency.



Think before posting. Once content is published online it may be shared, screenshotted, and preserved indefinitely even after deletion. There is no effective way to fully retract content once it has been seen. Apply the same judgment to social media posts about District-related matters as you would to official written communications.

The on-duty/off-duty line does not eliminate this policy. This policy applies to District-related content regardless of whether the person posting it is on duty, off duty, or using a personal device. A post about an incident, a patient, a colleague, or a Board decision carries the same risks whether posted during a shift or at midnight from home.

Your affiliation matters. When you identify yourself — explicitly or implicitly — as a member of the District on social media, your posts reflect on the organization. This does not mean you cannot express personal views; it means personal views posted in connection with your District identity must be clearly identified as personal, not official.

The District's duty to the public extends online. SPCFPD serves a community that is watching. Patient dignity, victim privacy, operational security, and the public's trust in emergency services are real values that can be harmed by careless social media use. This policy is not about restricting expression for its own sake; it is about protecting the people the District serves.

5. PERSONAL USE — PROHIBITED CONTENT

The following categories of District-related content are prohibited on personal social media accounts. These prohibitions apply to all persons subject to this policy regardless of platform, device, or time of day.

- (a) **Confidential information.** No post shall disclose confidential information as defined in Policy 200-2.04, including executive session content, personnel matters, patient and EMS records, attorney-client communications, pre-decisional drafts, or security-sensitive information. See Policy 200-2.04 §§ 4 and 6.d for the full list of confidential categories and the explicit social media prohibition.
- (b) **Incident media without authorization.** No photographs, video, or audio recordings of incident scenes, patients, victims, bystanders, or property damage at emergency scenes may be posted without express authorization from the District Chief. This prohibition applies even after the incident is cleared and even if the media appears to show nothing sensitive. See § 6 for the full incident media rules.
- (c) **Patient and victim information.** No information identifying or reasonably likely to identify a patient, victim, or person involved in an emergency incident may be posted under any circumstances. This prohibition is absolute and survives end of service. It applies to written descriptions as well as visual media. HIPAA 45 C.F.R. § 164.502 prohibits disclosure of protected health information; violations may carry personal civil and criminal liability independent of any District disciplinary action.
- (d) **Content discrediting the District or the fire service.** No post shall make false statements of fact about the District, its personnel, or its operations; make disparaging personal attacks on colleagues or community members in connection with District matters; or otherwise bring the District or the fire service into disrepute. Legitimate criticism and good-faith reporting of concerns should be raised through internal channels per Policy 200-2.13.
- (e) **Content compromising operational security.** No post shall disclose station staffing levels, apparatus deployment locations or schedules, coverage gaps during deployments, alarm system details, or any other information that could be used to exploit reduced District response capability. This protection is not classified information — it is common-sense operational security for a volunteer department serving a rural community.
- (f) **Personal information of personnel.** No post shall disclose the home address, personal telephone number, personal email address, personal vehicle information, or daily routine of any District personnel member without their express consent. Personnel safety is a legitimate concern in communities where District decisions may generate strong local reaction.
- (g) **Harassment, discrimination, and hostile conduct.** No post shall constitute harassment, bullying, or discriminatory conduct directed at a colleague, community member, or other person in connection



with District matters. Such conduct may violate Colorado law (C.R.S. § 13-21-611) in addition to this policy and applicable personnel policies.

- (h) Implied District endorsement.** No post shall imply that the District endorses a commercial product, service, political candidate, ballot measure, or political party. This includes use of the District name, badge, or logo in connection with personal commercial or political activity.

6. INCIDENT MEDIA — PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO

Incident scenes are emotionally and legally sensitive environments. Images and video from those scenes — even images that seem mundane — can identify patients, reveal personal property, expose tactical positions, prejudice insurance or legal proceedings, and cause lasting harm to victims and families. The following rules govern all incident media regardless of whether it was captured on a personal device or District equipment.

- a. Authorization required for all posting.** No incident media may be posted on any personal or official social media account without the express prior authorization of the District Chief. Authorization may be given for public education content (e.g., fire prevention) where no patient, victim, or sensitive tactical information is identifiable. When in doubt, do not post. Ask the District Chief first.
- b. Absolute prohibition — patients and victims.** No image, video, or audio recording that depicts or identifies a patient, victim, or person in medical or physical distress may be posted under any circumstances, even with faces obscured or names omitted. The prohibition applies to still images, video, screen captures from body cameras or dash cameras, and any other visual or audio medium. A single recognizable detail — a tattoo, distinctive clothing, a vehicle, a house — can identify a person. When uncertain, do not post.
- c. Minors.** No image or video depicting a minor may be posted in connection with an incident, regardless of whether the minor is a patient, victim, bystander, or witness.
- d. Post-incident clearance does not equal authorization.** The fact that an incident has been cleared, that time has passed, or that news media has already published information does not authorize personnel to post incident media. The authorization requirement applies regardless of what is already publicly available.
- e. Memorial and tribute posts.** Posts honoring a deceased community member or Line of Duty Death require coordination with the District Chief and, where appropriate, the family. The District Chief will establish the official District response and may authorize personnel to share or amplify official posts. Independent tribute posts involving incident details or imagery require authorization per subsection (a).

If you are unsure whether a photograph is safe to post, do not post it. Send it to the District Chief and ask. The cost of asking is a few minutes. The cost of a HIPAA violation, a lawsuit, or a family's permanent grief is not.

7. OFFICIAL DISTRICT SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- a. Authorization.** Only persons expressly authorized by the Board Chair (for governance content) or the District Chief (for operational content) may create, maintain, or post on behalf of official District social media accounts. Authorization shall be documented and reported to the Board. Unauthorized creation of accounts in the District's name is prohibited.
- b. Content standards.** All content posted on official District accounts shall: (i) be accurate and consistent with official District positions; (ii) serve a legitimate public education, emergency notification, or community information purpose; (iii) comply with all prohibitions in § 5 of this policy; and (iv) be appropriate in tone and substance for a public safety agency serving a diverse rural community.
- c. Political neutrality.** Official District accounts shall not endorse, oppose, or comment on any political candidate, ballot measure, political party, or political position. The District is a special district of the State of Colorado; its public communications must remain neutral on electoral and political matters.



This prohibition applies even to ballot measures directly affecting the District — factual information about a measure may be shared, but advocacy is prohibited.

d. Response to negative or false content. When the District's official accounts receive negative, hostile, or false comments, the authorized account manager shall notify the District Chief and Board Chair before responding publicly. Responses shall be factual, professional, and non-combative. Individual personnel shall not engage in public disputes on behalf of the District on personal accounts. See § 8(b) for the proper reporting procedure.

e. Account security. Login credentials for official District accounts shall be maintained by the District Chief and Secretary/Treasurer and shall not be shared with unauthorized persons. Credentials shall be changed whenever an authorized account manager leaves their role. The District Chief shall maintain a current inventory of all official District accounts and their access credentials in the District's official records.

8. PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION AND DISCLAIMER REQUIREMENT

When a person posts District-related content on a personal account in a context where they identify themselves — explicitly or by implication — as District personnel, they shall make clear that the views expressed are personal and do not represent an official position of the Southern Park County Fire Protection District. A statement such as "Views are my own and do not represent SPCFPD" satisfies this requirement. This disclaimer requirement does not excuse compliance with any other provision of this policy.

a. Reporting District business. Personnel who post about District business — including Board decisions, policy changes, operational updates, or community events — on personal accounts are encouraged to direct the public to the District's official channels (www.guffeyfire.net, official social media accounts) rather than serving as an informal public information officer. Personnel who receive media inquiries shall direct them to the District Chief or Board Chair per Policy 200-2.01 § 4.10.

b. Responding to negative or false content about the District. When personnel encounter social media content that is false, misleading, or defamatory about the District, they shall report it to the District Chief rather than responding publicly on their own accounts. Public disputes on social media rarely improve a situation and frequently make it worse. The District Chief will determine the appropriate official response, if any.

9. DIRECTOR-SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

This section supplements the Director obligations in this policy with the additional requirements that apply specifically to elected Board members. BAM v1.1 § 9.1.3 is the primary authority for Director social media conduct; this policy supplements it at the all-personnel level. In any conflict between this section and BAM § 9.1.3, the BAM controls.

No implied official positions. Directors shall not post content that could reasonably be interpreted as an official Board position on any matter before the Board unless the Board has formally taken that position at a duly noticed public meeting. A Director's personal view on an upcoming vote, expressed on social media, may be mistaken for the Board's position and can prejudice community deliberation.

No pre-decisional disclosure. Directors shall not disclose the substance of Board deliberations, preliminary votes, or working positions from work sessions or informal Director discussions before a final public decision is made. See also Policy 200-2.04 § 5.c (Deliberative Confidentiality).

No prejudging pending matters. Directors shall avoid posting content that could constitute a pre-judgment of a quasi-judicial or contested matter pending before the Board, including personnel matters, complaints, and procurement decisions. Such posts may undermine the Board's ability to render an impartial decision and may expose the District to legal challenge.

Consult the Board Chair when uncertain. BAM § 9.1.3 directs Directors to consult the Board Chair when uncertain whether a post is appropriate. Directors are encouraged to apply this standard liberally — a brief conversation before posting is far less costly than a retraction after.



10. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

- a. Reporting a potential violation. Any person who observes social media content that appears to violate this policy shall report it to the District Chief (for operational violations) or the Board Chair (for Director governance violations) as promptly as practicable. Reports may also be submitted through the anonymous complaint process in Policy 200-2.13. Good-faith reports shall not result in adverse action against the reporting person.
- b. Preservation of evidence. When a potential violation is reported, the reporting person should preserve a screenshot or other record of the content before reporting, as social media content may be deleted quickly. The District Chief shall preserve any records received in connection with an investigation.
- c. Investigation. Investigations of potential violations shall be conducted per the procedures in Policy 200-2.13 and applicable personnel policies. The District does not routinely monitor personal social media accounts of its personnel. However, content that is reported, publicly visible, or brought to the District's attention through other means will be reviewed and may result in investigation.
- d. HIPAA-related violations. Any potential disclosure of protected health information through social media shall be reported immediately to the District Chief, who shall consult District Counsel and evaluate HIPAA breach notification obligations under 45 C.F.R. § 164.400 et seq. HIPAA obligations are independent of this policy's internal procedures.

11. ENFORCEMENT AND CONSEQUENCES

Violations of this policy are subject to enforcement under Policy 200-2.01 § 7 and the progressive discipline procedures in Policy 300-3.13 (pending). Consequences shall be proportionate to the severity, nature, and impact of the violation and may include:

- For paid staff and volunteers: counseling, written warning, suspension, or termination consistent with Policy 300-3.13;
- For Directors: formal written censure by Board resolution at a duly noticed public meeting; mandatory additional ethics training; referral to the Colorado Independent Ethics Commission where applicable;
- For contractors: contract suspension or termination and disqualification from future District engagement;
- For all persons: civil and criminal liability for HIPAA violations, defamation, harassment, or other conduct that violates applicable law, independent of any District disciplinary action.

No adverse action shall be taken against any person for making a good-faith report of a potential violation, for seeking guidance about whether a specific post would comply with this policy, or for declining to post content at the request of another person.

12. TRAINING AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Social media training shall be incorporated into the annual ethics training cycle per Policy 200-2.01 § 9. Training shall specifically address: the prohibited content categories in § 5; the incident media rules in § 6; the HIPAA implications of patient-related content; and the reporting procedure in § 10. All Directors, paid staff, and active volunteers shall acknowledge this policy as part of the annual Code of Ethics Acknowledgment per Policy 200-2.01, Appendix A.

13. ANNUAL REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This policy shall be reviewed in the Q1 annual review cycle per Policy 100-1.06. The District Chief shall evaluate whether new platforms or technologies have emerged that require updates to the definitions in § 3 or the prohibited content categories in § 5, and shall present any recommended amendments to the Board before each review. Amendment requires a majority Board vote per Policy 100-1.06 § 5.



14. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this policy is held invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

PASSAGE AND ADOPTION.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors of the Southern Park County Fire Protection District at a duly noticed public meeting, by the following vote:

Director	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN
Sean English (Board Chair)	AYE		
Mike Brandt (Secretary/Treasurer)	AYE		
Mike Parrish	AYE		
Mike Smith	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Jennifer Taylor	AYE		

ATTESTATION.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned duly authorized officers hereby attest to the adoption of this policy.

Sean English

Board Chair — Board of Directors, SPCFPD

Date: May 12, 2026

Mike Brandt

Secretary/Treasurer — Board of Directors, SPCFPD

Date: May 12, 2026

Mike Parrish

Board Member — Board of Directors, SPCFPD

Date: May 12, 2026

Mike Smith

Board Member — Board of Directors, SPCFPD

Date: _____

Jennifer Taylor

Board Member — Board of Directors, SPCFPD

Date: May 12, 2026

CERTIFICATION.

I, Mike Brandt, Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Southern Park County Fire Protection District, Park County, Colorado, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Policy 200-2.09 duly adopted by the Board of Directors at a duly noticed public meeting, at which a quorum was present and acting throughout.

Mike Brandt

Secretary/Treasurer — Southern Park County Fire Protection District

Date: May 12, 2026



Document Revision History

Document: 20260408_ADMIN_200-2.09_SocialMediaPolicy_DRAFT-v0.4 Policy: 200-2.09 — SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY — ALL PERSONNEL

Table with 4 columns: Ver., Date, Author, Changes / Status. Rows include v0.1 (Initial adoption), v0.2 (Two amendments), v0.3 (BAM version reference update), v0.4 (BAM cross-reference correction), and V1.0 (Formally adopted).

This policy shall be interpreted consistently with: BAM v0.8 (§ 9.1.3 — Director Social Media); Policy 200-2.01 (Code of Ethics and Conduct §§ 4.10, 4.12); Policy 200-2.04 (Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure § 6.d); Policy 200-2.10 (Community Engagement and Public Education); Policy 200-2.13 (Citizen Complaint Procedure); Policy 300-3.13 (Progressive Discipline — pending); HIPAA 45 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164; C.R.S. § 24-18-101 et seq. (Colorado Government Ethics Act); C.R.S. § 13-21-611 (Colorado Cyberbullying Statute).

— END OF POLICY 200-2.09 —

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