

County Social Media Resources

(adapted from the Texas Association of Counties)

The National Association of Counties (NACo) has put together a [resource page](#) for county officials interested in learning about ways to approach social media. Included in the page are examples of county social media policies from around the country. These policies come from large and small counties and include input from communications consultants, county officials and staff with experience working with the complexities of social media issues. NACo has secured permissions from the original drafters and welcomes any county to borrow or repackage these policies to suit their own needs.

Legal Considerations of Social Media

Elected officials and governmental entities have legal concerns related to social media that the general public does not. However, due to the relative newness of social media, legal guidance is lacking for county officials. A [PowerPoint](#) from NACo presenter and San Mateo County Deputy County Counsel Glenn Levy highlights some legal issues that county officials should assess before delving into the social media realm.

Some of the relevant legal areas covered in the PowerPoint include public meeting law, open meetings law, public record laws, confidentiality issues, copyright issues and employment/HR issues. This is not a legal opinion but rather a starting point for county officials considering whether to engage their counties in social media.

NYSAC suggests county officials get input from their county attorneys or other local counsel about whether and how to implement a social media policy.

Top Six Twitter Tips

NYSAC uses Twitter to keep county officials abreast of the latest issues during the legislative session, training opportunities, new research, and ongoing educational opportunities. The following are our Top Six Twitter Tips for county officials.

1. Format

All tweets must be less than 140 characters long.

2. Follow, Follow, Follow

Get all your Twitter news in one feed on your homepage by “following” an account. Here are some Twitter accounts you might want to follow to get started:

- NYSAC: @nyscounties
- National Association of Counties: @NACoTweets
- New York State Senate: @NYSenate
- NYS County Highways Association: @countyhighways

- Governor Cuomo: @NYGovCuomo
- Your State and Federal representatives

3. Mentioning Others:

To mention another user, type the "@" symbol followed by the username.

› For example: Just attended @NYSCounties Legislatve Conference – ready to advocate for county needs during the NYS legislative session!

4. Hashtags:

Use hashtags (#) before a word to link to other tweets with the same theme. Use trending hashtags or create your own. Hashtags can be more than one word, but they can not include any spaces. Click on a hashtag to view all of the tweets in that conversation/event/theme.

› For example: #NYSAC16 is the hashtag for all 2016 NYSAC events.

5. Twitter Help Center:

Search on the Twitter Help Center to find:

- Twitter Basics
- Twitter 101: How should I get started on Twitter?
- Get to Know Twitter: New User FAQ
- Twitter Glossary

6. Fast Follow:

Don't want a Twitter account but want NYSAC updates? Use your cell phone to text "Follow NYSCounties" to 40404 to get tweets via text message.