

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

WSBA Entity Social Media Accounts & Working with the WSBA

We encourage and support sections in their efforts to communicate with members—and for some WSBA entities (e.g., sections, committees, etc.), using social media might be a great option. We have recently updated WSBA’s *Social Media Guidelines and Protocol* to allow WSBA entities to directly operate and update their social media accounts under the guidance of important organization-wide parameters aligned with WSBA Bylaws, policies, rules, and regulations.

All WSBA entities that want to create a new social media account will be expected to understand the *Social Media Guidelines and Protocol* and to sign the *Social Media Editor Agreement* before activating their account.

- [Social Media Guidelines and Protocol](#)
- [Social Media Editor Agreement for WSBA Entities](#)

Before making the decision to open a social media account, here are some important considerations and best practices.

What is social media?

Social media encompasses websites and applications that allow users to create an account to participate in a two-way exchange of ideas, thoughts, and information through virtual networks and communities. Examples of popular social media platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok, although this list is always changing.

How do I know if social media is right for my section – and what platform should I choose?

First and foremost, a social media presence is right for your section if a majority of your members already participate and use the social media platform. You might consider polling members to determine their social-media preferences and use. Second, once you open an account, be prepared to post content on a regular basis to keep members active and engaged.

Here’s a rundown of the major platforms right now and what they are best used for:

- Facebook is the largest social media platform in terms of user numbers and is largely informational based, meaning it is ideal for sharing information and starting dialogues through the comment feature. Facebook allows entities (like sections) to create their own page, on which you can post events, photos, updates, videos, and live feeds. Facebook users can “Like” your page, and your page posts will appear in their news feed.
- Twitter is a rapidly growing social media platform with a bustling legal community (legal organizations, attorneys, judges, bar associations, and law schools). On Twitter, entities (like sections) can create an account from which to share brief (no more than 280

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characters) posts. Twitter is ideal for sharing news items and commenting; often posts can turn into larger discussions about relevant and timely topics. Groups with robust Twitter participation can also use the platform for a live dialogue during an event when a customized hashtag (a way to identify trending topics) is used.

- LinkedIn is a business-focused site, which offers great networking opportunities and professional resources. Due to its business emphasis, it is not as “social” (two-way conversations) as other platforms. An entity (like sections) can create a “company” page and allow members to identify as part of the group on their personal accounts. Entities on LinkedIn can recruit for employees/members and position themselves as experts in certain business subjects.
- Instagram is all about pictures! Images are the main content, accompanied by brief descriptions and comments. It is a rapidly growing social media platform, but users are younger in demographics (more than half of users are between the ages of 18 to 29). It is mostly accessed via mobile. Instagram is a good choice to build visual appeal and show faces and places involved with an entity.

Don't know where to start or have questions? Contact WSBA Communication Coordinator connors@wsba.org.

Our entity decided to open a social media account. Now what do we do?

Congrats on deciding to take the plunge into the exciting world of social media! To get your account set up, please contact connors@wsba.org. He will walk you through the steps and talk about how to best support you with your account, content goals, and outreach. He also has specific tips for different platforms.

What are the dos and don'ts when it comes to posting?

As outlined in the *Social Media Guidelines and Protocol* and the *Social Media Editor Agreement*, do post relevant, timely information for your members. Here are examples:

- Newsletters;
- Articles in your area of law;
- Discussion questions;
- Meeting information;
- Events;
- CLE programs;
- Member photos;
- Projects your section is currently working on.

Do NOT post:

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- Anything unrelated to your entity's business, events, and interests.
- Anything with inappropriate language.
- Any political position/statement or endorsements of political positions contrary [to GR 12.1](#). If you are uncertain, please check with Connor or your WSBA staff liaison.
- Images, videos, and live streams without written or verbal permission from people in them, consistent with WSBA's [Photo and Video Permission Release Procedures](#).
- Images, videos, or livestreams that include alcohol.
- The full **WSBA Social Media Guidelines and Protocol** are available for your review [here](#).

How often should I be posting?

Ideally you should try and post at least several times a week to show your account is active. There is no minimum or maximum for posting but the more consistent your content is, the better engagement you will have with your audience.

Will the WSBA be monitoring our social media activity?

WSBA will not actively monitor content or posts; however we do maintain access to section social media accounts and reserve the right to work with social media editors or edit/delete posts that violate [WSBA Social Media Guidelines and Protocol](#).

If you have additional questions once your account is set up please email our Communications Coordinator, Connor Smith at connors@wsba.org, including what section you are with and what your inquiry is regarding in the body of your email message.

Our WSBA [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#) accounts have been helpful tools to engage with our members, the public and other organizations. We're excited for you to join us on WSBA social media!