



**GOVERNMENT OF
MONTSERRAT**

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

2022



**Developed by
Director, Information &
Communication**

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Purpose

The Government of Montserrat has an overarching interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on its behalf through the use of Social Media sites (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). This Social Media Guideline document establishes standards for the development and use of Social Media by any Government of Montserrat Ministry or Department as a means of disseminating information about the activities of the Government of Montserrat.

Social media platforms representing the Government of Montserrat (Ministries/Departments) are digital assets for the public service. Social media sites (Facebook, Twitter & Instagram) bearing the name of any ministry or department in Government, should be used for the sole purpose of disseminating information from and about the Ministry/Department to members of the public; and to facilitate communication with members of the public (local and overseas).

Nothing in this document restricts, prohibits or infringes on the legal and protected right of freedom of expression of individuals using social media in their personal capacity.

As a public entity, the Government of Montserrat must abide by certain standards to serve the people of Montserrat, including those living overseas.

General Guidelines

1. The development of any social media page for any Government Ministry or Department must be approved by the Permanent Secretary in the respective Ministry, on the advice of, or in consultation with, or by alerting the Director of Information and Communication.

2. Official Government social media pages should make clear that they are an approved communication platform for and on behalf of the Government. This is done by doing the following:
 - a) Selecting 'Government Organisation' as the type of page.
 - b) The name of the page must be the name of the Ministry preceded by or followed by 'Montserrat'. For eg: 'Montserrat Ministry of Health and Social Services' or 'Ministry of Communication, Works, Energy and Labour-Montserrat'.
 - c) The profile image must be the logo of the respective Ministry.
 - d) The cover image must be reflective of the Ministry's activities and can be changed based on significant dates for the Ministry or Montserrat as a whole. For eg: a group photo of staff for Christmas Day or a photo of the Minister, who has overall responsibility for the Ministry, with other officials etc.
 - e) In the 'About' section of the page provide a brief overview of the role of the Ministry. For eg: The Ministry of Health and Social Services is mandated for the promotion of health and social development in Montserrat and is responsible for Public Health, Primary and Secondary Care, Environmental Health and Social Services.
 - f) Contact Details – Provide the telephone number for the Ministry and an appropriate email address, and link to the Ministry or Department's web page. (Each Ministry has a web page on the government website; the link for the Ministry/Department's page should be used.)

3. The page (specifically Facebook) must have at least two administrators, who must be employed by the Government of Montserrat. The Permanent Secretary within the Ministry, and the Director of Information & Communication must be notified of the administrators for each page. This is recommended, as there have been instances of pages linked to GoM and no one within the public service has access to the page, and in other instances the pages become inactive because individuals who created the page no longer work with the Government.
4. If an Administrator or Officer assigned a page role on the Ministry's Facebook page leaves the Government or no longer works in the Ministry, then the other Administrator of the page will remove that officer from the assigned page role on Facebook. The remaining Administrator will then add another authorized Officer within the Ministry/Department. This is why it is essential for there to be at least two Administrators.
5. There should only be one Facebook or other social media (Twitter, Instagram) page per Ministry. As it relates to Facebook, once a Ministry's Facebook page has been created, designated/assigned officers from Departments within the Ministry, desirous of posting about their specific department, can be given administrative or editorial access to the page. This will avoid the presence of multiple pages, representing departments under the same Ministry. Exceptions should only be made for special programme areas or circumstances, however, this must be agreed by the respective Ministry's Permanent Secretary through consultation with the Director of Information and Communication.
6. PLEASE DO NOT SHARE YOUR PERSONAL PASSWORD/LOG IN DETAILS. Currently, login details for Government social media pages are based on the personal details of the Administrator(s), Editors and others assigned roles on the page. In other words, to gain access to a Government Facebook page, the Administrator/Editor or other person assigned roles on the page must first log into their own personal accounts. Therefore, it is important that these individuals do not share their personal log in details with others. Doing so will automatically grant other unauthorized persons access to the Government pages, and can compromise the page.
7. All page roles, including 'Editor' should only be assigned to public Officers within the Government of Montserrat.
8. The Government of Montserrat website at <http://www.gov.ms> will remain the Government's primary internet presence and should be made available in the 'About Us' tab on social media sites. However, if the Ministry has an external website then the hyperlink for that website should also be made available in the 'About' tab.

9. Employees (particularly Senior Officers) of the Government of Montserrat must be mindful of comments made on social media, especially those on Government and national issues. This is important as even a comment on one's personal page can be taken as being an official comment from a Government employee.

10. When using social media in a private capacity, employees sharing their personal opinion on matters of national interest or subject matters related to the work of the Government of Montserrat, must clearly state that it is their personal opinion and not those of the Government of Montserrat nor the Ministry/Department he or she represents. This is essential as the comment can be viewed as an official one and could also become included in private media coverage on the same or related subject matter.

11. The content on any Government social media page/site shall only pertain to Government related activities, programmes, events and services. Content includes, but is not limited to text/written information, photographs, videos, reels, infographics such as posters, and hyperlinks.

12. The following notice/disclaimer must be visible in the general information section of the page:

“The intended purpose of this page is to serve as a mechanism for communication between the Government of Montserrat’s (insert Ministry) and members of the public. However, this page is not the primary method of communication with the (insert Ministry’s name), and any notices or requests for services must be made via official communication methods such as direct emails to the Ministry at (insert email address), or by other traditional methods of notification such as telephone (insert number) or hard copy mail.”

Public Comments/Engagement Guidelines

The Government of Montserrat encourages engagement with members of the public, through social media. However, as a public entity, it is essential that certain standards are upheld at all times to avoid bringing the Government into disrepute.

1. As part of the 'General Information' in the 'about us' section, the following statement should be posted on all social media sites:

The Government, through the (insert Ministry's name) retains the right to remove any content that does not comply with the following guidelines or any other comment of content deemed inappropriate. The Government of Montserrat disclaims any and all responsibility and or liability for any content deemed inappropriate for posting, which cannot be removed in a timely manner.

Comments are welcome on our page, but please do not post any material that contains:

- hate speech
- profanity, obscenity or vulgarity
- comments that could be considered prejudicial, racist or inflammatory
- nudity or offensive imagery (including, but not limited to, in profile pictures)
- defamation to a person or people
- sexual content or links to sexual content

- name calling and/or personal attacks
- comments that infringe on copyright or another person's intellectual property
- spam comments from individuals or groups, such as the same comment posted repeatedly on a profile
- personal information about you or another individual (including identifying information, email addresses, phone numbers or private addresses)
- false representation of another individual, organisation, government or entity
- promotion of a product, business, company or organization including comments to promote or sell a product.

Habitual offenders will be blocked from commenting on content from this social media page.

2. Social media page administrators and editors, must monitor content being posted on the page, including comments, to ensure that they are not violating Government social media comment guidelines in point 1. If any violation is

observed the comment should be removed with immediate effect. Repeat offenders may be blocked.

3. The Administrators of any Government social media page reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by the department-(designated Social Media Administrator(s) for 2 months, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.
4. The guidelines outlined in point 1 must be displayed to users in the 'About us' section or made available by hyperlink.
5. When a Government of Montserrat employee responds to a comment posted under a Government social media page/account, the response should be coming from the page name and not the employees personal name. In the event that, the individuals personal name is being displayed in the response, the employee must make it clear that he/she is responding in his/her capacity as a Government authority figure on the subject matter.
6. All comments posted to any Government of Montserrat Facebook sites are bound by Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, located at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php> , and the Government of Montserrat reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.
7. All comments posted to any Government of Montserrat Twitter sites are bound by Twitter's Terms of Service, located at <https://twitter.com/tos> , and the Government of Montserrat reserves the right to report any violation of Twitter's Terms of Service to Facebook with the intent of Twitter taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

Reporting/Removal of Unauthorized Comments

Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by the Ministry or Department for a reasonable period of time, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available..

The Government of Montserrat reserves the right, at any time and without prior notice, to deny access to the Social Media site to any individual who violates this Policy.

Hacked/Unauthorized Access of Accounts/Fake Accounts

In the event that a social media page belonging to any Government of Montserrat Ministry of Department is hacked or locked, the Administrator must report this to the ICT Coordinator at the Ministry of Communication, Works, Energy and Labour so that the appropriate actions can be taken to secure/save/recover the account.

If an account belonging to the personal account of an Administrator of any Government of Montserrat Ministry of Department is hacked then this must be reported to the ICT Unit for swift action to be taken to avoid the hacker gaining access to the Government pages. Remember: Administrators have the power to delete Facebook pages, so it is essential that any unauthorized access if reported to the ICT Coordinator at the following email address: howel@gov.ms

Accounts which have been created purporting to be a Government of Montserrat page, Ministry or Department Page must be also be reported to the ICT Coordinator at the email address listed above.

Emails being sent to the ICT Coordinator on any of the above matters, must also be copied to the Director, Information and Communication at smithv@gov.ms

Terms of Service

Each type of Social Media maintains a “Terms of Use” agreement. All comments posted to any Government Social Media Site are bound by these Terms of Use. Therefore, the Government reserves the right to report any user violation.

This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

If you have questions or comments regarding this policy, please email smithv@gov.ms copied to op@gov.ms