**Social Media posting IRB template and guidelines**

Texas State is a public institution and must abide by certain rules. It's important that you keep the following policies in mind while recruiting and conducting research as a Texas State researcher. If using a Texas State account, it is the researcher’s responsibility to follow applicable federal, local, state, and University polices that may apply. Refer to [UPPS 06.05.05](https://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/06-05-05.html)

1. **Protect Private Information**

Protect private and confidential information. Abide by the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)](http://policies.txstate.edu/university-policies/01-04-31.html). This is especially important in dealing with students who post questions online about their educational circumstances (e.g. “Did my credits transfer?”). Ask the student for a private conversation through appropriate, official channels (email, phone).

## Your Content is Public

Social media content, including posts, comments, messages and replies, are available to the public and reflect on Texas State University. While we encourage you to interact with the community, you should not conduct official business on social media accounts. Refer official business through official administrative channels such as email.

Social media is always evolving and changing. Social media account administrators should attempt to keep content on their accounts for two years to meet ADM320 General Correspondence [records retention requirements](http://www.univarchives.txstate.edu/records/rm-rrs.html).

## Obey Copyright Law

Social media administrators are expected to follow all copyright and intellectual property laws when posting to any social network. Always get permission to use copyrighted material, and always give credit for the material. [UPPS 01.04.27](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/UPPS/upps-01-04-27.html)contains a detailed description of this policy.

1. **Make Content Accessible**

Texas State strives to make content accessible to all users, and we must adhere to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards. In order to achieve this, descriptive text must be applied to video and images when possible.

Alt text (alternative text) describes images to individuals who are unable to see them. For more information on using and writing alt text, please visit: <https://moz.com/learn/seo/alt-text>

If you create a video, use closed captions as they help convey your message when the sound is off and to individuals with hearing impairments. Although the capabilities for captions vary across platforms, make an effort to use them when possible.

* Facebook allows you to add a video captioning file, called an .srt file, to videos that are uploaded.
* Twitter does not let you caption videos through the platform, but you can share YouTube or Vimeo videos with embedded captions.
* Instagram allows you to upload an .srt file for video captions for an ad only.
* Snapchat does not support captions natively.

More information about accessibility on social media can be found here: <https://accessibility.umn.edu/tutorials/accessible-social-media>

The Texas State ITS department can assist you with ordering captions from Rev through [Mediaflo](http://mediaflo.its.txstate.edu/accessibility/caption-options/rev.html).

1. **Obtain IRB approval**

All Texas State Research recruitment materials should be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to posting. Documentation of support for recruitment purposes from non-Texas State affiliated groups may not be required if only posting on digital platforms and if there is no sharing of personal information or contact information with the researcher.

Please refer to the template below on specific guidelines that apply to research recruitment posts.

**IRB template**

1. Include 2-3 sentences to address population
2. Must state it’s a research study
3. Include researcher contact information or add link (QR code, hyperlink) to IRB approved document (i.e. flyer, website) that includes contact info
4. Must state “Do not alter this IRB approved post”

Example:

Are you a stressed parent whose 2-5 year old is behind in talking? We want to help you. We are #TXST health professionals conducting a research study! See flyer (insert hyperlink/link) for details on participating. Do not alter this IRB approved post

Resources:

* [University Marketing Social Media](https://www.socialmedia.txstate.edu/) – Includes links to other resources and best practices
* [University Marketing Social Media Policies](https://www.socialmedia.txstate.edu/policies.html)