

## Are social media posts considered government records?

From a records retention point of view, they can be. If the information you are posting or receiving on a social media platform documents **unique government business**, the post is probably a government record.

Examples of government business include:

- public service announcements
- changes in office hours
- job announcements
- complaints
- event publicity
- road closures

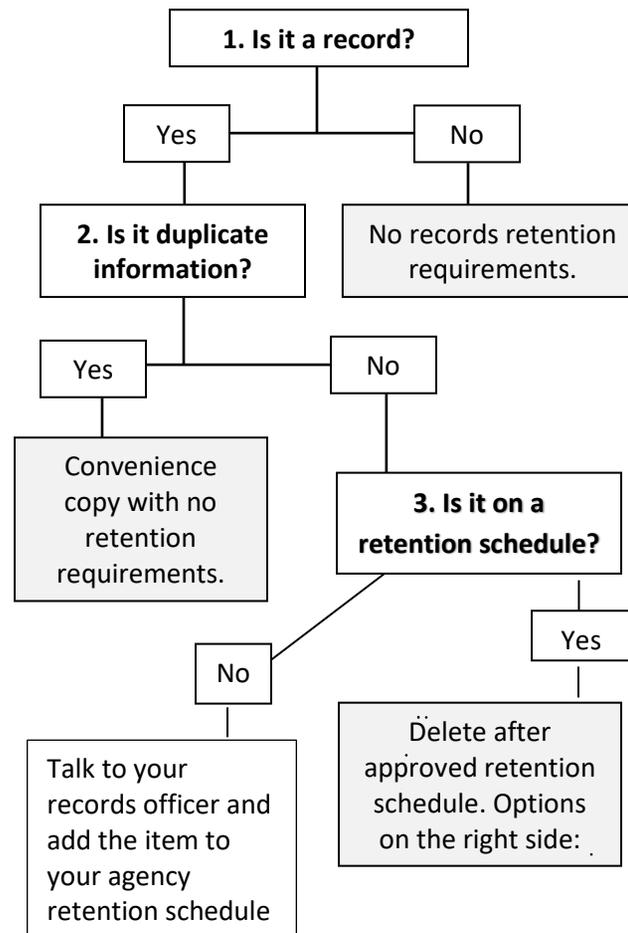
**For state agencies only: MD 205.42 Social Media** states that information in a post should not be unique, and should exist elsewhere (on your website, a share drive, on paper, etc.), not the official record copy but duplicate information, which has no retention requirements.

If a post simply points to external resources, it may be **transitory information** (records of temporary usefulness consisting of routine information used for communication) and can be deleted as soon as it is no longer administratively valuable or its purpose has been served.

**CAUTION:** A government record with an expired retention period may not be destroyed if any litigation, claim, Right to Know request, audit, or other action involving the record is open. Consult your agency's records management policies and Records legal liaison before destroying any records.

## Social Media Records Quick Reference

### Three-Step Drill



## How long should state and local governments retain social media records?

**It depends.** Social media records should be classified into records series based on their content and function. They tend to fall under these common records series:

### Transitory Information

**County & Municipal:** AL-1

Retention: Retain as long as of administrative value.

**State Agencies:** G001.021

Retention: Retain as long as of administrative value.

### Public Relations Records

**County:** AL-33, **Municipal:** AL-20

Retention: Retain as long as of administrative value.

**State Agencies:** G002.002

Retention: 2 years, contact Archives

### Complaints

**County & Municipal:** AL-1 for general complaints

Retention: Retain as long as of administrative value.

**State Agencies:** G001.0013

Retention: 2 years

### General Correspondence

**County and Municipal:** AL-1

Retention: Retain as long as of administrative value.

**State Agencies:** G001.006

Retention Period: 2 years