# Example Tobacco Control Agency
# Social Media Response Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to provide direction on how to respond to social media community member questions and comments as well as mitigate risk to the agency's brand. Responding to the public provides an opportunity to drive advocacy by acknowledging and thanking individuals for positive statements and encouraging further involvement. These guidelines will help reinforce the agency's social media objectives by engaging with the public directly.

**Code of Conduct/Rules for Participation:**
Rules for community member participation will be specified for engaging within the agency's social media community. These will support a spam-free, family-friendly community experience. Items that will be removed include profanity, offensive language, personal attacks and illegal items (e.g., laws that govern use of copyrights, etc., will be followed.).  Repeated violations of the rules for participation will result in banning from the community.  These rules will be posted or linked to on all agency social media pages in the "about" section.

**Response to Positive Comments:**
Response to positive comments is at the discretion of the social media coordinator. In general, response should thank community members for specific acts of advocacy (e.g., supporting smoke-free places, vowing to quit smoking, etc.) Higher levels of engagement, such as sharing photos or stories, are particularly worthy of response, e.*g., "Lisa, thanks for the great photo."*

**Answers to Community Member Questions:**
Questions may be answered by the social media coordinator if other community members do not answer them first. Responses will include encouraging tobacco control advocates to continue their involvement in the movement or providing tips on how to quit smoking. Responses may also come in the form of a providing a link to a website where more information resides with a sentence or two addressing the question. This kind of engagement allows community members to see that the agency is listening and responding.

**Frequently Asked Questions:**
Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) will be provided to the community. FAQs may be useful to manage response to recurring questions and in addressing breaking issues.

**Reposting Previous Community Member Postings:**
On occasion community members share stories, photos and video expressing their commitment to the tobacco control movement. Reposting these assets by the agency in various ways (within status updates, photo albums, etc.) may help promote greater advocacy among community members. When these assets are reposted, the given community member should be thanked directly for their contribution to the community.

**Response to Negative Comments and Complaints:**
Response to any negative comments must remain positive, never engaging in an argument. The first step will always be to identify the complaint type, as this will determine response:

1. Legitimate complainer
    • Treat each comment/question with respect
    • Respond publicly in original channel

2. Engaged critic (offering suggestions or disagreeing respectfully)

- Treat each comment/question with respect
- Respond publicly to the community (not the individual) when deemed necessary, *E.g., "Bob (and others who have shared), thanks for taking the time to share your comments. There are several reasons why we (e.g., made an ad about the environment, etc.)..."*

3. Troublemakers (who may have grudge against tobacco control or represent the tobacco industry)
- Allow advocates to respond to troublemakers. If no immediate response, consider asking other community members for feedback to help manage the issue
- If violating our community code of conduct (e.g., profane or otherwise hateful comments) remove posts and notify community member why posts have been removed (if explanation deemed necessary)
- If troublemaker posts similar messages excessively (e.g., daily), remove new posts. If attacks persist, remove member from community

**Response to Spam:**
On occasion, some community members will post various forms of unsolicited messages such as promotion of various other websites. This is acceptable if the websites are relevant to pushing forward the tobacco control movement. However, posts which don't add value to existing conversations and simply promote products or websites will be removed.

In general, spam or posts are to be deleted if they contain:
1. Posts or conversations which use profanity
2. Threats or malicious language involved
3. Links to tobacco industry promotional sites
4. Links to external, irrelevant sites
5. Irrelevant viral memes and non-sequiturs such as: "This is Facebook Bob", "Can this X get more fans than Y", etc.
6. Links to internal Facebook pages which are not fan/product related
7. Racial comments
8. Obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit material
9. Solicitation of passwords or personal information from anyone
10. Repeated posts, especially ones which are off-topic