

Maharashtra Imposes Restrictions on Government Employees' Social Media Conduct



The Maharashtra government has introduced new social media guidelines for its employees, explicitly prohibiting them from criticizing the policies of the state or any other government in the country. Issued via a Government Resolution (GR) on Monday, July 28, 2025, these norms aim to regulate the online conduct of public servants and ensure professional neutrality, with violations leading to disciplinary action under the Maharashtra Civil Service Conduct Rules 1979.

The comprehensive guidelines apply to all state government employees, including those on contract or deputation, as well as staff of local bodies, boards, corporations, and public sector undertakings. A key directive mandates employees to maintain separate social media accounts for personal and official use, strictly avoiding any overlap that could compromise their impartiality or the government's image. Furthermore, the use of any social media applications or websites banned by either the state or central government is strictly forbidden, even for personal use.

Beyond the prohibition on policy criticism, the GR outlines several other significant restrictions. Employees are barred from posting or sharing objectionable, discriminatory, defamatory, or hateful content. Personal social media accounts are to feature only the employee's photograph, with explicit instructions against including official designations, government logos, uniforms, or images of official properties like office buildings or vehicles in personal posts, photos, or reels. While employees are permitted to share updates on collective efforts or the successful implementation of government schemes, the guidelines caution against self-praise or individual glorification.

The new rules also emphasize responsible sharing of information. Confidential dossiers or official documents, in part or whole, are not to be uploaded, forwarded, or shared on any platform without prior authorization. For official communication and publicizing government schemes, only authorized personnel are permitted to use official media channels, and that too with the explicit approval of a competent authority. Messaging applications like WhatsApp and Telegram may be used for internal coordination but are not to be utilized for unauthorized external outreach or information dissemination.

The Maharashtra government's move reflects a growing concern among administrations about the potential misuse of social media by public servants, ranging from the unauthorized disclosure of sensitive information to undermining public trust. By clearly defining permissible online conduct, these guidelines seek to maintain the integrity and credibility of the governmental system. Employees are also mandated to formally hand over control of official social media accounts to their successors upon transfer or retirement, ensuring continuity and security of official digital assets.