
5.0 SOCIAL MEDIA

5.01 PURPOSE

- A. The Department endorses the secure use of social media to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange, streamline processes, and foster productivity.
- B. This policy establishes the Department’s position on the utility and management of social media and provides guidance on its management, administration, and oversight.
- C. This policy is not meant to address one particular form of social media, rather social media in general, as advances in technology will occur and new tools will emerge.

5.02 POLICY

- A. Social media provides a new and potentially valuable means of assisting the Department and its personnel in meeting community outreach, problem-solving, investigative, crime prevention, and related objectives. This policy identifies potential uses that may be explored or expanded upon as deemed reasonable by administrative and supervisory members.
- B. The Department also recognizes the role that these tools play in the personal lives of some Department members. The personal use of social media can have bearing on Department members in their official capacity. As such, this policy provides information of a precautionary nature as well as prohibitions on the use of social media by Department members.

5.03 DEFINITIONS

- A. **Blog:** A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions, or comments. The term is short for “Web Log.”
- B. **Page:** The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- C. **Post:** Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
- D. **Profile:** Information that a user provides about themselves on a social networking site.
- E. **Social Media:** A category of Internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and use participation. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1. Social networking sites (Facebook, Instagram, MySpace)
 - 2. Microblogging sites (Twitter, Nixle)
 - 3. Photo and video sharing sites (Flickr, YouTube)
 - 4. Wikis (Wikipedia)
 - 5. Blogs
 - 6. News sites (Digg, Reddit)
- F. **Social Network:** Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, and socialize with others using a range of technologies.
- G. **Speech:** Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words or in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication.

- H. **Web 2.0:** The second generation of the World Wide Web focused on shareable, user generated content, rather than static web pages. Some use this term interchangeably with social media.
- I. **Wiki:** Web page(s) that can be edited collaboratively.

5.04 ON-THE-JOB USE

- A. Jackson Police Department-Sanctioned Presence
 - 1. Where possible, the page(s) should link to the Department's official website to share current critical information with the public in an easily accessible format.
 - 2. Department social media page(s) shall be designed for:
 - a. Visitors
 - b. Residents
 - c. Crime victims
 - d. Volunteers
 - e. Recruitment purposes
 - f. Public service announcement information
 - 3. Procedures
 - a. All Department social media sites or pages shall be approved by the Chief of Police, or their designee.
 - b. Where possible, social media pages shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the Department and shall have Department contact information prominently displayed.
 - c. Social media content shall adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all information technology and records management policies of the Town.
 - (1) Content is subject to public records laws.
 - (2) Relevant records retention schedules apply to social media content.
 - (3) Content must be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with open records laws and e-discovery laws and policies.
 - d. Where possible, social media pages should state that the opinions expressed by visitors to the page(s) do not reflect the opinions of the Department.
 - (1) Pages shall clearly indicate that posted comments will be monitored and that the Department reserves the right to remove obscenities, off-topic comments, and personal attacks.
 - (2) Pages shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure.
 - 4. Department members representing the Department via social media outlets shall do the following:
 - a. Conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Department and, accordingly, shall adhere to all Department standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum.
 - b. Identify themselves as a member of the Department.
 - c. Not make statements about the guilt or innocence of any suspect or arrestee, or comments concerning pending prosecutions, nor post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate confidential information, including

photographs or videos, related to Department training, activities, or work-related assignments without authorization of the Chief of Police.

- d. Not conduct political activities or private business.
 5. The use of Department computers by members to access personal social media is permitted on a limited basis but shall not be abused.
 6. The use of social media related to police activities is permissible to further a legitimate criminal investigation or to gain legitimate police information or intelligence.
 7. If an employee uses personally owned devices to manage the Department's social media activities or uses the device in the course of official duties, the contents of the device will be discoverable, and the device will be subject to seizure to comply with court orders.
 8. Employees shall not knowingly violate copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions in posting materials to social media.
- B. Potential Uses
1. Social media is a valuable investigative tool when seeking evidence or information.
 2. Social media can be used for community outreach and engagement.
 3. Social media can be used to make time-sensitive notifications.

5.05 MEMBERS PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- A. Effect on the Workplace – Generally. This policy covers member personal use of social media affecting the workplace and/or the Department's ability to perform its public mission. The Department recognizes the role that social media plays in the personal lives of some Department members. However, the personal use of social media can have bearing on members in their official capacity as they are held to a high standard by the community. Engaging in prohibited speech outlined in this policy may provide grounds for discipline and may be used to undermine or impeach an officer's testimony in legal proceedings.
- B. Members Shall Not Post Speech That Negatively Impacts the Department's Ability to Serve the Public. Members may express themselves as private citizens on social media sites as long as members do not:
1. Make, share, or comment in support of any posting that includes harassment, threats of violence, or similar conduct.
 2. Make, share, or comment in support of any posting that ridicules, maligns, disparages, expresses bias, or disrespect toward any race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, or any other protected class of individuals.
 3. Make, share, or comment in support of any posting that suggests that Department members are engaged in behavior reasonably considered to be unlawful or reckless toward public safety.
 4. Otherwise violate any law or Department policy.
 5. Members shall make reasonable efforts to remove content appearing on their social media account that violates this policy upon learning of the offensive content.
- C. Members May Not Post Privileged Information or Represent the Department.
1. Members shall not post or otherwise disseminate any confidential information they have access to as a result of their employment with the Department.

2. Members may not make any statements, appearances, endorsements, or publish materials that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of the Department.
- D. Members May Not Use Their Town of Jackson Email Address to Register a Personal Account on Social Media.
- E. Reporting violations:
 1. Any member becoming aware of or having knowledge of a post or of any website or web page in violation of the provisions of this policy shall notify their supervisor immediately for follow-up action.