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	SUPERSEDES:	December 30, 2013	
	OPI:	DIRECTOR	
	REVIEW DATE:	August 10, 2017	
	Approving Authority	Thomas Faust Director	
SUBJECT:	SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY		
NUMBER:	1340.5A		
Attachments:	None		

SUMMARY OF CHANGES:

Section	Change
<i>Changes</i>	<i>Major changes throughout the policy.</i>

APPROVED:



Thomas Faust, Director

8/10/16

Date Signed

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1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** This policy establishes standards for the proper use and management of social media networks by the D.C. Department of Corrections' (DOC) and its employees.
2. **POLICY.** It is DOC policy to establish standards for the proper use and management of social media networks by the D.C. Department of Corrections' (DOC) and its employees.
3. **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.** This policy is intended to provide clarity to DOC employees on how to conduct themselves on social media. It also informs them of their responsibilities when using social media while at the same time protecting the interests of DOC.
4. **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**
 - a. In accordance with the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, D.C. Official Code §2-1401.01 et seq., (Act) the District of Columbia does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, disability, source of income, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense, or place of residence or business. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that is also prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action.
5. **DIRECTIVES AFFECTED**
 - a. **Directive Rescinded**

PP 1340.5	Social Media Policy (12/30/2013)
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 - b. **Directives Referenced**
 - 1) PP 2420.4 E-Mail and Internet Use
 - 2) PP 3300.1 Employee Code of Ethics and Conduct
 - 3) PP 3800.1 Equal Employment Opportunity Program
 - 4) PP 3310.4 Sexual Harassment Against Employees

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6. **AUTHORITY.**

- a. DC Code § 24-211.02, Powers; promulgation of rules
- b. District of Columbia Personnel Manual Chapter 18, Employee Conduct

7. **STANDARDS REFERENCED. None**

8. **APPLICABILITY** This applies to:

All DOC/District government social networking accounts hosted/owned by the DOC/District government or hosted through a third party.

All users of DOC/District Government Internet and Government social networking services that either view or create content including full and part time employees, contractors and volunteers authorized to use District Government owned equipment or network resources, and who have been provided Internet service via DOC/District government social networks.

The personal use of social media by employees, contractors and volunteers consistent with all District government and DOC polices and federal and District laws relating to intellectual property protection, privacy, misuse of government resources, sexual harassment in the workplace, data security and confidentiality.

9. **DEFINITIONS**

Social Media. A category of Internet based resources that enable the user to generate content and encourage other user participation and includes but is not limited to blogs, collaborative projects, content communities, and social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Pinterest, You Tube, Wikipedia and others.

10. **OVERVIEW**

- a. Social media networks are highly efficient research and communications tools that are available through District government networks to its employees, contractors and volunteers to assist them in supporting District government functions and conducting government business within its organization, with government and private business partners, and with the public.
- b. The DOC uses social media to improve communication with staff and the public and disseminate information to a broader audience of stakeholders.

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- c. Approval of the content of social media on behalf of DOC is restricted to the Director of the DOC or his/her designee and the DOC Government and Public Affairs Coordinator or his/her designee.
- d. Employees, contractors and volunteers using social media on behalf of the DOC must be authorized by the Director of the Department or his/her designee and the Government and Public Affairs Coordinator or his/her designee.
- e. Inmates shall not be provided or allowed access to social media while committed to the D.C. Department of Corrections.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The DOC Deputy Director for Management Support in collaboration with the DOC Government and Public Affairs Coordinator shall ensure adherence to this policy.
- b. Alleged or suspected violations of the social media policy will be investigated by the DOC with violations referred to OCTO for suspension of service.
- c. The DOC is responsible for any terms of use or service agreements agreed to when creating social media accounts.
- d. The DOC Office of Government and Public Affairs shall ensure that information DOC makes available through social media sites is appropriate for public access and editorially suitable.
- e. Employees shall adhere to the provisions of this directive and sign an acknowledgement of receipt of its issuance

12. ALLOWABLE USES

- a. Agency Use of Social Media
 - 1) All DOC social media sites or pages shall be approved by the Director of the DOC or his/her designee and the DOC Government and Public Affairs Coordinator or his/her designee.
 - 2) Each DOC social media page shall include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and the scope of the agency's presence on the website.

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- 3) Social Media pages should link to the DOC's website.
 - 4) Social media pages shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the DOC and shall have the DOC Logo and contact information prominently displayed.
 - 5) Social media content shall adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all those related to information technology, records management and e-discovery.
- b. The DOC shall:
- 1) Provide staff, stakeholders and the community with real time access to agency information.
 - 2) Disseminate news and information on services, programs and events.
 - 3) Enhance outreach.
 - 4) View and post content for research, communication and information exchange related to the agency mission or work tasks.
 - 5) View and post content for research, communication and information exchange related to training and professional development.
 - 6) View and post content for information exchange around agency programs and services.
 - 7) Announce District government laws, procedures, policies, and rules.
 - 8) Provide governmental communications not requiring a high level of security.
 - 9) Communicate and exchange information for professional development and to maintain current training or education.

13. PROHIBITED USES

- a. The DOC is prohibited from using social media for the following:
- 1) Any purpose that violates a federal or District government laws, codes or policies, standards or procedures.
 - 2) Advertising or promoting a private business enterprise or activity.

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- 3) Access to and/or distribution of pornography, fraudulent information, harassing material, racially discriminatory, disparaging or harassing information (in violation of DOC sexual harassment policy), and hate related information or opinions.
- 4) Transmission of statements that contain profane language, pander to bigotry, sexism or other forms of prohibited discrimination, or can in any way be construed as intending to harass or threaten another individual.
- 5) Any activity with political or religious purposes.
- 6) Dissemination of sensitive information that would reflect negatively on or damage the public image of the District government or its agencies.
- 7) Disruption, obstruction or burden of network resources.
- 8) Intentional or negligent introduction of computer viruses into the DOC/District government network.
- 9) Sharing sensitive information that could compromise public safety or violate the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) privacy rules*.
- 10) Transmission of sensitive information unless protected by an approved encryption mode.

14. DEPARTMENT AUTHORIZED USE

- a. Department personnel representing DOC via social media outlets shall do the following:

The use of social media on behalf of DOC is restricted to employees, contractors and volunteers authorized by the Director of the DOC or his/her designee and the DOC Government and Public Affairs Coordinator or his/her designee. The use of social media by authorized DOC users shall be consistent with and in adherence to the allowed and prohibited uses by the DOC set forth above.

- b. When using social media on behalf of the Department, the authorized user must:
 - 1) Conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the DOC and accordingly, adhere to all DOC standards of conduct and observe conventionally accepted protocols and proper decorum.

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- 2) Identify themselves as a member of the DOC.
- 3) Not disclose any agency information or materials unless authorized to do so by the Department Director or designee and the Government and Public Affairs Coordinator or his/her designee.
- 4) Follow the Department's position on issues at all times and not include comments or posts that reflect personal rather than work-related positions on Departmental related issues.
- 5) Follow policies, procedures and laws restricting the use of intellectual property such as copyright, trademark and service marks, information protected by confidentiality and privacy laws, information protected by the laws of privilege, information subjected to non-disclosure agreements and other information legally protected from use and disclosure to the public.
- 6) Only use District government approved social media sites.
- 7) Not comment or post information on pending litigation, legal matters, personnel and security issues.
- 8) Not use his/her District of Columbia government e-mail address to register on social networks, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal electronic communication. Subject to the above, the authorized user may use social media in furtherance of the Department's communication strategy.

15. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- a. Department personnel are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree that their speech does not impair or impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among coworkers, or negatively affect the public perception of the Department. As public employees, DOC personnel are cautioned that their speech either on or off duty, and in the course of their official duties that has a nexus to their professional duties and responsibilities may not necessarily be protected under the First Amendment right to free speech under the U.S. Constitution. This may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the DOC. Department personnel should assume that their speech and related activity on social media sites will reflect upon their position within the DOC. Therefore, DOC employees, contractors, and volunteers shall not engage in any activity that would reflect unfavorably on DOC or be deemed

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inappropriate by DOC, or that conflict with any federal or District laws, regulations or policies.

- b. Content contributed to social media sites by DOC employees may not claim to represent the Department or its policies or disclose protected information regarding staff, the public or offenders under DOC supervision.
- c. Employees who reference their membership or employment with the Department shall include a disclaimer that the opinion s/he posts are personal and not the opinion of the Department or the District of Columbia government. Material posted can be viewed by the public and misconstrued to represent the official position of the Department. Consequently, an employee must take proper precautions to ensure that his/her activity in a social media forum does not lead the public to reasonably believe that the employee is acting on behalf of the DOC or District government.
- d. A DOC employee acting in his/her private capacity should:
 - 1) **BE RESPECTFUL:** Always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, residents and visitors of the District, vendors, or people who work on behalf of the District. The employee should also keep in mind that he/she is more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with co-workers or the immediate supervisor, rather than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if he/she decides to post complaints or criticism, the employee should avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, or as disparaging to customers, members, employees, or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying, even if it is done after work hours, on a personal electronic device, or from home. Examples of such conduct include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by federal law, District law, or Department policy.
 - 2) **BE HONEST AND ACCURATE:** The employee should always be honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if a mistake is made, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts he/she has altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. An employee should not post any

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information or rumors that he/she knows or should know to be false or misleading about the Department, fellow employees, members-, residents or visitors of the District, vendors, or people working on behalf of District

- e. A DOC employee acting in his/her private capacity is precluded from engaging in the following activities while on a social media network, personal web pages or blogs:
- 1) Using language that would lead a reader/viewer to believe that the social media site is operated by DOC.
 - 2) Using any DOC patches, logo or coat of arms.
 - 3) Using inmate images (with or without permission).
 - 4) Using any material for which the Department holds a copyright, trademark, service mark, patent or other intellectual property right.
- f. Employees using social media shall not release or reveal confidential or other non-public information obtained by virtue of his/her position with DOC. This includes, but is not limited to inmate identities or institutional information, inmate or employee medical and mental health treatment information, personnel information, criminal history record information, security and intelligence information, investigative information, operational concerns, confidential policies and procedures, privileged information such as legal advice, or jail layout.,
- g. DOC employees, by virtue of their employment with the Department, continue to have ethical obligations that apply to personal activity when not at work. When using social media, an employee must not violate the DOC PP 3300.1, *Employee Code of Ethics and Conduct* policy and the District Code of Conduct or be subject to appropriate discipline. Therefore employees are prohibited from using speech containing obscene or sexually explicit language, images or acts and statements, or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage or otherwise express bias against any race, religion or any protected class of individuals.

16. IMPROPER USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

In accordance with DOC PP 2420.4C, *E-mail and Internet Use*, a DOC employee that uses social media in violation of the requirements of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination consistent with provisions of the applicable District Personnel Manual and the collective bargaining agreement:

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- a. Chapter 16 General Discipline and Grievances
- b. Chapter 8 Probationary Employees
- c. Chapter 9 Excepted Service Employees
- d. Chapter 38 Management Supervisory Service
- e. Chapter 18, Part 1 Employee Conduct

A contractor or volunteer shall be subject to immediate dismissal/removal from their position and will not be allowed access to the DOC facilities or technology. Any employee becoming aware of, or having knowledge of any posting, website, or webpage that violates this policy, shall immediately notify his or his supervisor and provide a special report.

17. **MEDIA CONTACTS**

Employees should not speak to the media on the Department's behalf without contacting the Government and Public Affairs Office at 202-671-2137 or 202-671-2816.

18. **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you have questions or need further guidance on this policy, please contact the Department's Government and Public Affairs Office at 202-671-2137 or 202-671-2816.