	ANDOVER POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER	Number: M1219 Page: 1 of 4 Distribution: All
Title: SOCIAL NETWORKS, SOCIAL MEDIA & PERSONAL WEB PAGES		Section: Administration
Issued: 05/11/2010	Effective: 05/19/2010	Revised: 07/23/2014
Rescinds: All Previous	Amends:	
CALEA References: 26.1.1		
Review: Annual	Authority: Chief Michael A. Keller	

I. Purpose

The purpose of this General Order is to establish a conduct policy in regard to the use of social media and/or social networking sites; to uphold and maintain the professionalism of the Andover Police Department when applied to social media and/or social networking sites; and to ensure that inappropriate messages and/or materials are not sent, requested, posted or used in any manner that would embarrass or bring discredit to the agency.

II. Policy

It is the interest of the Andover Police Department to maintain professionalism throughout the agency and its employees. Employees shall utilize professionalism, honesty and respect when participating in such social media/social networking activities.

Employees of the Andover Police Department should remember that when posting to any type of personal web pages, social media sites, social networking sites, or other types of internet sites that their submissions can be seen and read by people other than those intended. Anything posted is saved on the site's server forever and cannot be deleted by the person making the post. Employees should use caution when posting photos, comments and other items as these posts can be used to question the employee's and the department's integrity and credibility.

In addition to this policy, all employees are required to adhere to the Computer Network and Internet Compliance Policy.

III. Definitions

Rev. 07232014

A. **Post:** Content an individual shares or "likes" on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.

B. **Social Media:** Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction. Social media uses internet and web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into social media dialogues.

C. **Social Networking:** The practice of expanding the number of one's business and/or social contacts by making connections through individuals.

D. Social Networking Sites: A website that provides a social structure made of individuals (or organizations), which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, financial exchange, dislike, or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige.

IV. Regulations

Rev. 07232014 **A.** Employees shall not post any material on personal web pages, social media sites, social networking sites or other internet sites that brings discredit to or may adversely affect the efficiency or integrity of themselves or the department [D].

B. Employees shall not post any written material, photographs or any other material to personal web pages, social media sites, social networking sites or other internet sites while on duty, unless it is a part of their official duty as a member of the Andover Police Department, or they are directed to do so by a supervisor [B].

C. Access to personal web pages, social media sites, social networking sites or other internet sites while on duty, except for official department business, should be kept at a minimum and shall not interfere with the performance of an employee's duties and responsibilities [A].

Rev. 07232014 **D.** Employees shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to which they have access as a result of their employment without written permission from the Chief of Police or his designee. This shall include information, photos, audio/video recordings from crimes or accident scenes, training, work related assignments, violations of the law, or law enforcement sensitive communications [B].

E. Any employee becoming aware of or having knowledge of a posting or of any website or web page in violation of the provisions in this General Order, or is aware of excess on-duty access to any of these sites, shall immediately report it to their supervisor [A].

Rev. 07232014 **F.** Photographs or other depictions of department emblems, uniforms, badges, patches, marked or unmarked police vehicles shall not be posted on personal web pages, social media sites, social networking sites or other internet sites without approval of the Chief of Police [A].

Rev. 07232014 **G.** Employees are prohibited from posting comments, pictures, artwork, videos or other forms of speech that ridicule, malign, disparage, or otherwise express bias against any race, any religion, or any protected class of individuals [D].

V. Procedures

Rev. 07232014 **A. Personal Use/Precautions**

1. Employees are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree that their speech does not impair working relationships of this department for which loyalty and confidentiality are important, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among coworkers, or negatively affect the public perception of the department.
2. As public employees, department members are cautioned that speech on or off-duty, made pursuant to their official duties-that is, that owes its existence to the employee's professional duties and responsibilities- is not protected speech under the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the department. Employees should assume that their speech and related activity on social media sites will reflect upon their office and this department.
3. For safety and security reasons, employees are cautioned not to disclose their employment with this department nor should they post information pertaining to any other member of the department without their permission.
4. When using social media, employees should be mindful that their speech becomes part of the worldwide electronic domain. Therefore, adherence to the department's code of conduct is required in the personal use of social media.
5. Engaging in prohibited speech noted herein, may provide grounds for undermining or impeaching an officer's testimony in criminal proceedings. Employees thus sanctioned could be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
6. Employees should be aware that they may be subject to civil litigation for
    a. Publishing or posting false information that harms the reputation of another person, group, or organization (defamation);
    b. Publishing or posting private facts and personal information about someone without their permission that has not been previously revealed to the public, is not of legitimate public concern, and would be offensive to a reasonable person;
    c. Using someone else's name, likeness, or other personal attributes without that person's permission for an exploitative purpose; or
    d. Publishing the creative work of another, trademarks, or certain confidential business information without the permission of the owner.
7. Employees should be aware that privacy setting and social media sites are constantly in flux, and they should never assume that personal information posted on such sites is protected.
8. Employees should expect that any information created, transmitted, downloaded, exchanged, or discussed in a public online forum may be accessed by the department at any time without prior notice.

B. Approval Process

1. Any employee seeking to use references to the Andover Police Department or the City of Andover on a personal website, web page, social networking site or other public forum shall submit a written request for approval to the Chief of Police through their chain of command.
   a. The request shall describe the proposed reference and purpose.
   b. A list of reference(s) and any media to be used shall be provided.
2. Any changes to previously approved postings must be re-submitted for approval.
3. Nothing in this General Order is designed to prevent an employee of the Andover Police Department from performing their duties and responsibilities, conducting intelligence gathering operations, nor completing a thorough follow-up investigation.
   a. Employees using social media or social networking sites in the performance of their duties and responsibilities shall provide their supervisor access to the account being used for such activities by providing the supervisor with the username and password necessary to gain access.