



PERSONNEL RULES AND REGULATIONS

RULE 6: <i>General Terms and Conditions</i>	EFFECTIVE: <i>January 1, 2015</i>
REGULATION 6: <i>Social Media Usage</i>	Pages: <i>1 of 6</i>

Section 1: Introduction

Social networking through the use of internet-based and other electronic social media tools is integrated into everyday life. The use of social media can be a fun and rewarding way for employees to share their life and opinions with family, friends, and coworkers. Use of Facebook, LinkedIn, blogging, wikis, and other online social media vehicles are commonplace. What employees do on their own time is a personal decision; however, activities in or outside of work that affect job performance, the performance of others, or County business interests or reputation are of concern.

The purpose of this Regulation is to provide employees with guidelines and requirements to eliminate any confusion regarding the use of social media. Social media sites include Sarpy County's hosted internet site(s) or affinity sites as well as participation in Non-Sarpy County social media sites(s) in which employees' affiliation with Sarpy County is known, identified, or presumed.

Social media may be used by employees for business-related purposes subject to the approval of their Department Head and the Information Systems (IS) Department. The restrictions are intended to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory restrictions, privacy, confidentiality, and ensure County electronic property remains secure. Social media includes, but is not limited to, social networks such as Facebook; blogs like WordPress; microblogs such as Twitter; wikis for example Wikipedia; video such as YouTube; podcasts; discussion forums; RSS feeds; photo sharing, like Flickr; etc.

Section 2: Definitions

The following definitions are meant to provide clarity to the terms used within this section of the Regulation:

Blog/Microblog: This is an abbreviation for "web log", and it is a site that allows an individual or group of individuals to share a running log of events and personal insights with online audiences.

Electronic Media: These are non-computing devices, such as CDs, DVDs, flash drives, hard disks, internal memory, and any other interchangeable, reusable, and/or portable electronic storage media (1) on which electronic information is stored, or (2) which are used to move data among computing systems/devices.

Sarpy County Information: Information in any form or media that is created by or on behalf of the County in the course and scope of business, regardless of whether that



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information is maintained or stored by Sarpy County and others on the County's behalf. Examples of County information include, but are not limited to, criminal investigations; inmate information; youth detainee information; court records; tax records; property records; intellectual property; financial information; human resource records; and business email messages; unless the record is deemed public information.

Podcast: A collection of digital media files distributed over the Internet for playback on portable media players and computers.

Protected Health Information (PHI): This data is individually identifiable health information (verbal, written, or electronic) about an inmate, detainee, employee's physical or mental health, the receipt of health care, or payment for that health care. PHI includes individually identifiable payments, enrollment, and disenrollment benefit information.

Social Media: This description covers a wide array of electronic communication methods including, but not limited to, blogs, microblogs, podcasts, discussion forums, online collaborative information and publishing systems that are accessible to internal and external audiences, wikis, photo and video sharing, and collaborative websites. This term also includes social network sites such as Facebook.

Wikis: Allows users to create, edit, and link webpages easily; often used to create collaborative websites.

Section 3: Provisions

The following requirements are applicable to both Sarpy County and Non-Sarpy County Hosted Sites:

- A. This Regulation applies to employees using social media while at work. It also applies to the use of social media when away from work, when employees' affiliation with Sarpy County is identified, known, or presumed. It does not apply to content that is otherwise unrelated to the County.
- B. Email Addresses – when conversing on a social media site, do not use an assigned County email address, instead use a personal email address.
- C. Social Media Disclaimer – employees are strongly advised to make it clear that what they say is representative of their own views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of the County. At a minimum, they should include one of the following standard disclaimers:



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The postings on this site are my own and do not represent Sarpy County's views, strategies, or opinions.

OR

DISCLAIMER: This is a personal website, produced in my own time and solely reflecting my personal opinions. Statements on this site do not represent the views or policies of my employer, past or present, or any other organization with which I may be affiliated.

Section 4: Hosted Sites

Sarpy County Hosted Sites

- A. Before using social media, employees are expected to adhere to applicable state and federal law, and County compliance requirements including the County's Anti-Harassment Policy and other related and applicable policies. In addition to this Regulation, all rules that apply to County communications also apply here.
- B. Employees are to be respectful; and therefore, may not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to another coworker, person, or entity when posting to County hosted sites.
- C. If posting to a County Hosted blog, the subject of the blog must focus on topics related to the organization.
- D. Employees must be honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if a mistake is made it must be corrected immediately.
- E. Employees must abide by law and respect copyright laws and may not post content or conduct any activity that fails to conform to any and all applicable state and federal law. This includes public meeting laws, public record law, and other related regulations.
- F. Employees must obtain written pre-approval from their Department Head and the IS Department before setting up any Sarpy County hosted social media.
- G. When posting electronic comments and statements, employees need to seek approval from the applicable Department Head to ensure the accuracy of information.



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Non-Sarpy County Hosted Sites

- A. Employees may not disclose any confidential, security, or proprietary information of, or about, the County itself, its employees, its clients, its affiliates, vendors, or suppliers.
- B. Employees cannot represent that they are communicating the views of the County or do anything that might reasonably create the impression that they are communicating on behalf of or as a representative unless they have been granted written permission to do so by their Department Head.
- C. Employees have an obligation to protect inmate/detainee, client, coworker confidentiality and therefore may not use or disclose any identifiable information of any kind. Even if an individual is not identified by name within the information the employee wishes to use or disclose, if there is a reasonable basis to believe that the person could still be identified from that information, then its disclosure would constitute a violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), other privacy laws/regulations, and the PRR and/or Policy Bulletins.
- D. Employees using non-County hosted sites must be clear that any postings are their own and do not represent the views or opinions of the County.

Section 5: Guidelines

Keep in mind that posts are visible by anyone with online access. It may be fine for employees to share their work at the County as part of their participation in an online community, etc., but employees do not have permission to reveal any information that compromises County policy or public positions. Employees are not to share anything that is proprietary and/or confidential to the County.

The following are a few guidelines to follow before posting any information on social media:

- A. Employees are strongly advised to refrain from posting items that could reflect negatively on the County or otherwise embarrass the organization, including comments or other posts about drug or alcohol abuse, profanity, off-color or sexual humor, and other inappropriate conduct. The use of ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or the engagement in any conduct that would not otherwise be acceptable in the workplace is prohibited.
- B. Employees are strongly advised to refrain from accessing social media while at work for personal, outside business, employment, or non-County related purposes.



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However, at Department Head discretion, limited, occasional, or incidental use of social media for personal non-County purposes is acceptable insofar as that use does not interfere with the County's business activities and as long as such use does not involve any of the following:

1. Interference or violation with the PRR, County policies, or departmental policies,
 2. Disruption of, or distraction, from the conduct of County business because of customer/client volume, content, frequency, etc.,
 3. Solicitation,
 4. Personal business activity for profit,
 5. Potential to harm the County,
 6. Illegal activities, and
 7. Permitting the display, storage, or recording of any kind of sexually explicit image, text, or document.
- C. Employees shall be responsible for any charges arising from personal use associated with social media. Employees are expected to act responsibly and shall be subject to disciplinary action if this privilege is abused.
- D. Employees are to show proper respect for people's privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory. Follow all privacy protection laws, such as HIPAA.
- E. Employees shall abide by all laws, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, and harassment.
- F. Employees are not to disclose Sarpy County's (or anyone else's) confidential or other proprietary information unless they have received written permission from their Department Head prior to sharing or publishing.
- G. Employees are not to reference County staff, inmates, detainees, clients, affiliates, vendors, or suppliers without their written approval.
- H. Employees are not to use social media to download or distribute pirated software or data.
- I. Employees desiring to publish content to any website or through any social media that has something to do with their own work must utilize a disclaimer (refer to the Blogging disclaimers under Provisions).
- J. Employees must ensure that social media use is consistent with the PRR and Policy Bulletins as well as other state and federal laws.



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- K. Employees are to make sure that online activities do not interfere with job performance and comply with departmental policies and guidelines.
- L. Departments that use social media are responsible for complying with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), First Amendment, privacy laws as well as information security policies established by the County.
- M. Social media is not to be used for employment recruitment unless authorized by the Human Resources Director.
- N. Employees may utilize paid leave, lunch, or break periods as well as time before or after work hours to access social media on personal electronic devices on a personal network or within established guidelines of their department when utilizing County-provided equipment and/or network.

Respecting differences, appreciating diversity of opinions, and speaking or conducting oneself in a professional manner is expected at all times. When employees are not completely confident about what they intend to share, they need to seek input from their Department Head to ensure that it is not violating the PRR or other related policies.

Section 6: Monitoring Employee Usage

Social media access may be randomly monitored by the IS Department. The Department may have software and systems in place that can monitor and record social media usage. The County will review activity and analyze usage patterns, and may choose to disclose this data in any manner the County deems appropriate.

Section 7: Reporting Violations

The County requests and strongly urges employees to report any violations or possible perceived violations to their Department Head or the Human Resources Department. Violations include discussion of the County and its employees, inmates, detainees, citizens, vendors, clients as well as any discussion of proprietary information and any unlawful activity related to the use of social media.

Employees found to be in violation of this Regulation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.