

## **Social Media/Networking Sites**

**Purpose:** To establish a policy and guidelines for the use of Agency operated/sponsored Social Networking Sites such as Facebook, Twitter and others as a means to distribute Agency news, public safety messages and related materials.

**Definition:** Social Networking: Connecting with a community of people in your network through services like Facebook and Twitter with various methods of online interaction.

Social Media: Online media like blogs, podcasts, videos, and news with a strong participatory element through comments, ratings, or other mechanisms.

**Internet Address:** Facebook: <http://tinyurl.com/ya4osdq>  
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/PCEmrManAgency>  
Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/PolkCoIaEmergMgt>  
Agency Website: <http://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/EmergencyManagement/>

### **Administrative Privileges:**

The Coordinator, Assistant Coordinator and Office Specialist shall all have Administrative Privileges to post content, grant access, remove access and update information in any Social Media/Networking Sites.

### **Agency Responsibility:**

It is the responsibility of the Agency to read and follow the usage policy of each website being utilized.

Posts will be accurate and factual and the Agency will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly.

The Agency is responsible for updating content on a regular basis, consistent with the needs of the Agency, while providing timely information to the public.

On any official sites, pages or blogs, the Agency will delete spam and inappropriate comments promptly.

### **Agency Prohibited Postings:**

Employees shall not post information that might discredit or imperil the efficiency of the Agency.

Postings that bully, intimidate, or harass any user.

Postings that are hateful, threatening, pornographic, or contain nudity or graphic or gratuitous violence.

Postings that are unlawful, misleading, malicious, or discriminatory

Postings that are protected by copyright, trademark, and other intellectual property laws.

Language that is considered to be obscene or profane.

### **Dealing With Prohibited Postings:**

Postings that violate the Prohibited Postings section of this policy shall be removed by the Agency as soon as they are recognized. Serious or continued violations shall result in the removal of the offending poster from access to our sites.

### **Dealing With Negative Postings:**

If someone is leaving negative comments about the Agency, respond to it while maintaining politeness. If comments are jumping to the wrong conclusion about the Agency, kindly correct them with the proper information. Thank them for their feedback, and encourage them to provide more. Leave your email address so they can contact you off the blog, if they choose.

### **Personal Postings:**

The intent of this policy is not to restrict the flow of useful and appropriate information, but to minimize the risks, legal and otherwise, to Polk County Emergency Management and its staff members. This policy is not intended or designed to prohibit the lawful exercise of employees' rights under applicable federal or state law. This policy applies to internet activity performed on duty and off duty; performed while using Agency equipment or personal equipment; and whether it occurs on or off the premises of the Agency. When posting comments to personal sites, staff members should make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the Agency.

Unless prohibited by law, the Agency may monitor the internet activity of its staff in a fair and non-discriminatory manner to ensure employee productivity, the safeguarding of protected information, ensuring high morale, protecting the Agency from lawsuits and, protecting the agency's reputation as well as business partners.

Employees shall not post information that might discredit or imperil the efficiency of the Agency.

Protected Health Information may not be posted or otherwise disseminated. This includes but is not limited to, patient's name, address, age, race, extent or nature of illness or injury, hospital destination, and crew member's names.

Posting photos, videos, or images of any kind that could potentially identify patients, addresses, vehicle license plate numbers is strictly prohibited.

Postings related to arrest information, criminal history data, intelligence data, criminal investigative data or surveillance data shall not be posted to any Social Networking or internet web page.

Staff members should always ask a supervisor if they have any questions about what is appropriate material to post.