



PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT

VOLUME 1 – Operations Manual

Social Media Policy

MP 105.18

06/15-N

I. TRANSMITTAL MESSAGE

Questions regarding this Social Media policy may be directed to the Public Affairs Section at 602-534-0953.

II. PURPOSE

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way people communicate and obtain information online, the Phoenix Fire Department uses social media tools to reach a broader audience. Communicating with our diverse audiences is important and we recognize the value of using social networking to enhance the way we engage with our customers, build new relationships, and initiate conversations about Phoenix Fire Department services.

Social media sites allow anybody to post anything, and anything posted on the Internet can stay online forever. The Phoenix Fire Department has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is communicated on behalf of the department on social media sites. This policy establishes procedures for the use of social media, guidelines for referencing the Phoenix Fire Department on social media platforms, and addresses social media in general.

Nothing contained in this Management Procedure shall be construed as denying employees their civil or political liberties as guaranteed by the United States and Arizona Constitutions.

Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed as interfering with the rights of employees and employee organizations under the City's Meet and Confer Ordinance. In addition, nothing contained in this policy shall be construed as interfering with the rights of employees and employee associations under the City's Meet and Discuss Ordinance.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy provides information to all employees. Additional direction is provided to employees who are authorized to speak on behalf of the Phoenix Fire Department; however, all employees should be aware of the guidelines regarding use of social media for official Phoenix Fire Department business.



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IV. DEFINITIONS

App – An application that can be downloaded for use on a desktop or mobile device.

City – Refers to the City of Phoenix.

City Business – All work performed that has a direct relation to the City's operation and activities. City business also includes authorized activities of labor unions and labor associations in coordination with management.

City Spokespersons – City employees who are authorized by the City Manager's Office to speak on the City's behalf, includes City department and function heads and their designees.

Comment – A response that is provided as an answer or reaction to a post or a message on social media sites.

Personal Site – A profile created on a social media platform by an individual for personal use and to share personal communication with friends and acquaintances. Personal sites do not include social media sites of labor unions, labor associations, or groups and organizations of City employees.

Platform – The software or technology that helps users to build, integrate or facilitate community, interactive and user-generated content. For example, a blog or a wiki is a social media tool, but the technology used to create and host them, such as Facebook or Twitter, is considered the platform.

Post – Content a person shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.

Professional Networking – A type of social media service that is focused solely on interactions and relationships of a business and professional nature rather than including personal, non-business interactions. Professional networking sites allow users to make connections through which they can find jobs, and also allow other users and possible employers to view profiles and share recommendations. Additionally, these sites allow professionals from different fields of interest to ask questions and share opinions and knowledge. LinkedIn is an example of a professional networking site.



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Profile – Information provided about a person or an entity on a social media site. A person’s social media profile is generally created by that individual.

Public Record – A record made or maintained by a City employee in the performance of that employee’s job, to memorialize official transactions, or as required by law.

Repost – Content an individual shares on a social media site that is created or generated by someone else or the act of publishing content on a site that is created or generated by someone else.

Social Media – Refers to the interaction among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social media is the collective of online communication channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, blogging, social networking, professional networking, and wikis are among the different types of social media. Social media includes social networking and professional networking sites.

Social Networking – The practice of expanding social contacts by making connections through individuals. A social networking service is a platform to build social networks or social relations among people who may share interests, activities, backgrounds or real-life connections. A social networking service consists of a representation of each user (often a profile), social links, and a variety of additional services. Social networking allows individuals to create a profile, create a list of users with whom to share connections, view and cross the connections within the system, and share information, photos, links, and items of interest. Examples include Facebook, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Twitter and YouTube.

V. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.
2. Department Heads are responsible for authorizing official Phoenix Fire spokespersons and for notifying the Public Information Director about these employee assignments.
3. Department Directors and Function Heads are responsible for ensuring their employees comply with this Management Procedure.



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4. The City Clerk Department is responsible for the City's Records Management Program, including retention requirements related to social media.
5. The Human Resources Department is responsible for providing guidance regarding appropriate employee behavior on social media.
6. The Public Information Office is responsible for providing guidance on how social media is used to represent the City.
7. Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

VI. POLICY STATEMENTS – All Employees

1. **Personal Social Media Presence.** Employees may express themselves as private citizens on social media sites. An employee's use of any social media site must comply with copyright laws, data security and privacy regulations, criminal laws, and any other applicable federal, state, and local law.
2. **Privacy and Social Media.** Social media and Internet use should not be considered anonymous. Employees should be aware that privacy settings for social media sites are constantly in flux, and they should not assume that personal information posted on such sites is protected. Published social media content may be explored, transmitted, stored, and archived by external entities. Even the strongest privacy settings cannot prevent an approved friend or authorized recipient from independently choosing to forward or repost the information. There is no such thing as a "private" social media site.

For example, while personal social media privacy settings may be adjusted so only friends or authorized individuals can view content, those same individuals can forward comments, posts, and pictures to anyone, or they could take screenshots of what is posted. As a result, what is posted on a personal social media site may be forwarded to co-workers and supervisors, which could negatively impact the work environment or have consequences in the workplace. Personal social media postings that relate to co-workers, other City employees, supervisors, or management, or activities that occur at work, can be considered as part of human resource or equal opportunity investigations and Notices of Inquiry.

Keep the "headline test" in mind when posting content or pictures to social media sites. Use your best judgment – if it is not something you would feel comfortable seeing in the media, or being seen by co-workers, other City employees, supervisors, or management, do not post it.



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3. **Speaking on Behalf of the Phoenix Fire Department.** Only those employees specifically authorized by management may speak on behalf of the Phoenix Fire Department. Employees must not mislead the public to believe the employee is an official spokesperson if they are not authorized to function in this capacity.
4. **Identification of City Employment in Social Media.** Employees who participate in social networking and professional networking sites may decide to include information about their work with the Phoenix Fire Department as part of their personal profile, as it would relate to a typical social conversation. This may include:
 - a. work information included in a personal profile, to include City name, job title, and job duties;
 - b. status updates regarding an employee's own job promotion or other professional or work-related advancements, achievements, and honors; and
 - c. personal participation in City-sponsored events, including volunteer activities.
5. **Perception.** With social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional can be blurred. Employees identifying themselves as working for the Phoenix Fire Department should be mindful that they may be creating perceptions about themselves and about the City by customers, business partners, and the general public, and perceptions about themselves by co-workers, other City employees, supervisors, and management.

Employees must not represent or speak on behalf of the Phoenix Fire Department on their personal social media sites when they are not authorized to do so. Employees must not give the *appearance* that they are speaking on behalf of the department or posting comments as an official Fire Department representative on personal social media sites, when they are not authorized to speak on behalf of the department. This perception may be avoided by choosing to not post work-related information, featuring themselves while wearing a Phoenix Fire Department uniform or displaying the City logo, public safety patches, badges, or Phoenix Fire Department vehicles on a personal site – especially in profile images. These actions could cause people to believe employees are posting as authorized Phoenix Fire Department spokespersons, official department representatives, or on behalf of the City of Phoenix.



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Permitted and prohibited uses of City of Phoenix logos and symbols is set forth in A.R. 1.87, entitled “Use of the City of Phoenix Corporate Symbol.”

6. **City Business, City Time, and City Resources.** Employees must be engaged in City business while at work or while on City time. Accessing and posting to a personal social media site while at work or on City time is not appropriate.

Employees should not use their City of Phoenix e-mail addresses for communication on their personal social networking sites.

7. **Reposting.** Employees may repost official Phoenix Fire Department information and posts on their personal social media sites on their own time and using their own devices. Employees may choose to share and repost department news, events, and information from the Phoenix Fire Department’s website, pages, and social media sites or choose to become a fan of the various City and Department Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and other social media sites. Employees also may visit the City’s “Current City News” page for a comprehensive list of daily news headlines and social media sites. Linking directly to the City’s website is the most effective way to share complete information.

8. **Confidential or Proprietary Information.** Social media postings that contain proprietary images or materials belonging to the Phoenix Fire Department are prohibited except where authorized by official designees of the City. This includes, but is not limited to, Personal Identifying Information of individuals, Restricted City Information, and information about City business development, partnership negotiations and projects, investigations, or procurements. Examples and definitions of Personal Identifying Information and Restricted City Information are set forth in A.R. 1.90, entitled “Information Privacy and Protection.”

Employees may not disclose information on any social media network that is confidential to the Phoenix Fire Department or its employees or that is protected by data privacy laws.

Employees may not post any non-public images of Phoenix Fire Department premises and property, including floor plans.

9. **Decorum and Electioneering.** City employees must be mindful of policies and procedures regarding City elected officials or candidates running in a City



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Election. City employees may not engage in political activities involving City of Phoenix municipal elections, including recall elections, for Mayor and City Council except as set forth as “Permitted Activities” in A.R. 2.16. Permitted Activities for City elections include: registering and voting in any City election; privately expressing an opinion on candidates for Mayor and City Council; and being politically active in connection with a charter amendment, bond issue, referendum, or issue of similar character. These activities are permitted for an individual on his or her own time, but are not permitted while on duty, on any City property, or when the individual is in a uniform normally identified with the Phoenix Fire Department. City employees may not participate in any way whatsoever in campaign activities for candidates for the Mayor and City Council.

Examples of Permitted Activities and Prohibited Activities for City Elections, as well as National, State, and County Elections are set forth in A.R. 2.16, entitled “Political Activity – Time Off to Vote.”

VII. POLICY STATEMENTS – City Spokespersons

In addition to the policies that apply to all employees, Phoenix Fire Department spokespersons must also abide by the following standards:

1. **Privacy Expectations and Records Management.** In accordance with Arizona’s Public Records Law, the public may request information made or received by City employees in the performance of their jobs. Therefore, employees must consider all information, including social media postings, open to public view. Additionally, employees must comply with all records retention policies when posting to social networking forums and sites.
2. **Social Media Account Management.** Employees authorized to speak on the Phoenix Fire Department’s behalf must follow City standards when creating and managing social media accounts.
3. **Preserving the Public Trust.** Posts made on social networking sites on the Phoenix Fire Department’s behalf directly reflect the department. Employees authorized to speak on the Phoenix Fire Department’s behalf must:
 - a. not use their official roles to disparage the City organization, City elected officials, or fellow employees;
 - b. not endorse or disparage any commercial products, services, entities or political candidates;
 - c. promptly correct and acknowledge errors made in any posts;



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- d. not delete any posts unless they clearly violate the City's Social Media Terms of Use;
 - e. document unique, non-duplicative posts per the City's Records Management Program overseen by the City Clerk Department. Posting information on social media that is already part of another public record does not require documentation. However, any substantive response to any posting should be documented;
 - f. ensure information is approved by the appropriate supervisor or manager prior to posting;
 - g. use appropriate grammar and style when posting;
 - h. not conduct personal business on department social media sites or through City or department social media accounts;
 - i. only post electronic media that reflects the Phoenix Fire Department's high standard of ethical behavior.
4. **Respecting Intellectual Property.** Employees authorized to speak on the Phoenix Fire Department's behalf must comply with all laws and City policies related to intellectual property. This includes all copyright and trademark laws regarding use of the City bird logo, for posting electronic media to City social media sites, and for providing attributions for third party content.
5. **Guarding Against Privacy and Security Breaches.** Employees authorized to speak on the Phoenix Fire Department's behalf should exercise caution when downloading or using apps on Phoenix Fire Department social media sites. These apps may contain malicious software, collect excessive information about employees, or ask for more permissions than are needed to run. Be wary, regularly check app permissions, only download apps from legitimate app sources, and only use apps that benefit the City.
6. **Learning and Following Terms of Use.** Employees authorized to speak on the Phoenix Fire Department's behalf are responsible for learning and following corporate policies, such as "terms of use," on social media platforms to ensure an official department account is set up properly within the platform's environment.
7. **Using City Social Media Only During Working Hours.** Hourly employees authorized to use social media on behalf of the Phoenix Fire Department must do so during normal working hours unless otherwise authorized by their supervisor. Overtime is not approved for social media usage outside of normal working hours unless prior approval has been granted by the supervisor.

VIII. PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS AND RECORDS RETENTION



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City departments and functions are responsible for handling public records requests for the comments posted on their social media sites. Additionally, departments and functions are responsible for working with their Law, Human Resources, City Clerk, and Public Information Office representatives, as needed, before making the records available to the public.

If a new public record is created, its content must be maintained per its specific retention schedule. Input received on a policy or service must be saved and kept per its retention schedule. Refer to the City's Records Retention Schedule for detailed information regarding records maintenance and handling.

IX. PERSONAL USE

Employees are prohibited from posting on any networking or internet site any photographs, video, or audio recordings taken on department property and/or in the performance of official duties (including all official department training, activities, or work specific assignments) that are detrimental to the mission and functions of the department, that undermine respect or public confidence in the department, could cause embarrassment to the department or City, discredit the department or City, or undermine the goals and mission of the department or City.

1. Employees have no expectation of privacy for any personal communication or information sent or received via the City's network or City's devices.
2. Phoenix Fire Department personnel should expect 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.

X. COMPLIANCE

Violation of this Social Media policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

XI. RELATED POLICIES, STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

- a. A.R. 1.60 – Public Records Request Processing
- b. A.R. 1.61 – Records Management Program
- c. A.R. 1.63 – Electronic Communications and Internet Acceptable Use



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- d. A.R. 1.87 – Use of the City of Phoenix Corporate Symbol
- e. A.R. 1.90 – Information Privacy and Protection
- f. A.R. 1.92 – City Presence on the Internet
- g. A.R. 1.95 – Privacy Program
- h. A.R. 2.16 – Political Activity - Time Off to Vote
- i. A.R. 2.35(a) – Sexual Harassment
- j. A.R. 2.35(b) – Protected Category Harassment
- k. Citywide IT Standard - s1.10 Collaborative Technologies
- l. Citywide IT Standard Operating Procedure - s1.2.1 Access to Blocked Sites
- m. Employee Manual
- n. Ethics Handbook
- o. Department Social Media Policies

XII. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding this social media policy and appropriate employee behavior on social media may be directed to the Human Resources Department at (602) 262-6608. Questions regarding Phoenix Fire Department social media sites and how social media is used to represent the department may be directed to the Public Affairs Section at (602) 534-0953.