

## Department Use of Social Media

### 384.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that any use of social media on behalf of the Department is consistent with the Department mission.

This policy does not address all aspects of social media use; specifically, it does not address:

- Personal use of social media by Department employees (see the Employee Speech, Expression and Social Networking Policy)
- Use of social media in personnel processes (see the Recruitment and Selection Policy)
- Use of social media as part of a criminal investigation, other than disseminating information to the public on behalf of this Department

#### 384.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Social media** - Any of a wide array of Internet-based tools and platforms that allow for the sharing of information, such as the Department website or social networking services

### 384.2 POLICY

The Yolo County Probation Department may use social media as a method of informing the public about Department services, issues and other relevant events.

Department employees shall ensure the use or accessing of social media is done in a manner that protects the constitutional rights of all.

### 384.3 AUTHORIZED USERS

Only employees authorized by the Chief Probation Officer or authorized designee may utilize social media on behalf of the Department. Authorized employees shall use only Department-approved equipment during the normal course of duties to post and monitor Department-related social media, unless they are specifically authorized to do otherwise by a Supervisor.

The Chief Probation Officer may develop specific guidelines identifying the type of content that may be posted. Any content that does not strictly conform to the guidelines should be approved by Management prior to posting.

Requests to post information over Department social media by employees who are not authorized to post should be made through the employee's chain of command.

### 384.4 AUTHORIZED CONTENT

Only content that is appropriate for public release, supports the Department mission and conforms to all Department policies regarding the release of information may be posted.

Examples of appropriate content include:

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- (a) Announcements.
- (b) Tips and information related to crime prevention.
- (c) Investigative requests for information.
- (d) Requests that ask the community to engage in projects that are relevant to the Department mission.
- (e) Real-time safety information that is related to in-progress crimes, geographical warnings or disaster information.
- (f) Traffic information.
- (g) Press releases.
- (h) Recruitment of personnel.

### **384.4.1 INCIDENT-SPECIFIC USE**

In instances of active incidents where speed, accuracy and frequent updates are paramount (e.g., crime alerts, public safety information, traffic issues), the Chief Probation Officer's designee will be responsible for the compilation of information to be released, subject to the approval of the Chief Probation Officer..

### **384.5 PROHIBITED CONTENT**

Content that is prohibited from posting includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Content that is abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory or sexually explicit.
- (b) Any information that violates individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and those provided under state, federal or local laws.
- (c) Any information that could compromise an ongoing investigation.
- (d) Any information that could compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation or professionalism of the Yolo County Probation Department or its employees.
- (e) Any information that could compromise the safety and security of Department operations, employees of the Department, victims, suspects or the public.
- (f) Any content posted for personal use.
- (g) Any content that has not been properly authorized by this policy or a Supervisor.

Any employee who becomes aware of content on this Department's social media site that he or she believes is unauthorized or inappropriate should report such content promptly to a Supervisor. The Supervisor will ensure its removal from public view and investigate the cause of the entry.

### **384.5.1 PUBLIC POSTING PROHIBITED**

Department social media sites shall be designed and maintained to prevent posting of content by the public.

The Department may provide a method for members of the public to contact Department employees directly.

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### **384.6 MONITORING CONTENT**

The Chief Probation Officer will appoint a Supervisor to review, at least annually, the use of Department social media and report back on, at a minimum, the resources being used, the effectiveness of the content, any unauthorized or inappropriate content and the resolution of any issues.

### **384.7 RETENTION OF RECORDS**

The Chief Probation Officer or designee should work with the Custodian of Records to establish a method of ensuring that public records generated in the process of social media use are retained in accordance with established records retention schedules.

### **384.8 TRAINING**

Authorized employees should receive training that, at a minimum, addresses legal issues concerning the appropriate use of social media sites, as well as privacy, civil rights, dissemination, and retention of information posted on Department sites.