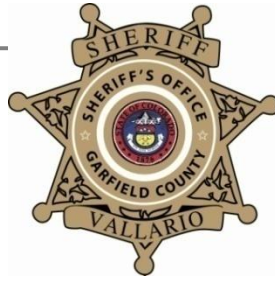


SHERIFF OF GARFIELD COUNTY

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GARFIELD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE POLICY / PROCEDURE GENERAL

SUBJECT: SOCIAL NETWORKING & PERSONAL WEBSITES

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 01, 2024

POLICY:

Whether representing themselves as members of the Garfield County Sheriff's Office or not, members will not post representations of themselves in their official Sheriff's Office uniform or other items which include but are not limited to the Sheriff's Office issued badge or patch, depictions of office vehicles or facilities on personal social networking sites that may bring discredit upon themselves or the Sheriff's Office. In addition, members must take proper care not to purposefully or inadvertently disclose any information that is confidential or law enforcement sensitive or breach any other member's privacy and confidentiality interests.

PURPOSE:

To provide a guideline for members of the Garfield County Sheriff's Office with regard to the use of and posting of information on social networking sites.

DEFINITION:

Social network sites that use Internet services to allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within that system, define a list of other users with whom they share some connection, view and access their list of connections and those made by others within that system. The type of network and its design vary from site to site. Examples of the types of Internet based social networking sites include: blogs, networking sites, photo sharing, video sharing, micro-blogging, podcasts, as well as comments posted on the sites. *The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the application of this policy.*

Posting information or content means to place information on the Internet site that is retrievable or observable by others, whether or not intended by the employee posting the information. Sending or transmitting information to certain web sites may allow that information or content to be permanently recorded and posted.

METHOD:

Conduct: Members may not post, send or transmit information or content to Internet-based social networks or web sites concerning any professional or personal conduct that may compromise a criminal or administrative investigation, bring disrepute to the Sheriff's Office, or content that would otherwise violate the Conduct Unbecoming provision contained in the CODE OF CONDUCT policy to wit: *Members will conduct themselves at all times both on and off-duty in a manner, which reflects more favorably on the Office.* Exceptions may be authorized by the Sheriff, and may include appropriately directed and supervised undercover Internet investigations.

Official business or information: Members shall treat the official business of the Sheriff's Office as confidential. Members shall not post, send or transmit prohibited information or content onto Internet based social networks or web sites. Prohibited information includes, but is not limited to discussions, written descriptions, narratives, pictures or drawings regarding official business or that are the property of, or identifiable to the Sheriff's Office.

As evidenced by FEMA's adoption, social media tools are becoming increasingly important in local emergency management communications. Nevertheless, even in times of crisis, disaster or emergencies, only employees with the authority to speak on behalf of the Sheriff's Office are permitted to do so. Whether internal or external, social media communications are never private. Sharing any information via social media channels that could compromise the security of a facility, complex or operations is prohibited.

Discussions regarding other members: Members shall not post, send or transmit information or content to Internet based social networks or web sites, any statement regarding the Office or other members which is untrue, defamatory, obscene, unlawful, which creates disharmony in the Office, interferes with the Office's ability to perform its functions, or impairs the working relationships among members. Additionally, members shall not send, transmit or post pictures or information about undercover officers from this office.