

<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</b> <b>Standard Operating Procedures</b>		
<b>Policy Name: Social Media Policy</b>		
<b>Policy Number:</b> 102.03	<b>Effective Date:</b> 11/14/14	<b>Page Number</b> 1 of 5
<b>Authority:</b> OWENS	<b>Originating Division:</b> <i>Executive Division</i>	<b>Access Listing:</b> <i>Level I: All Access</i>

**I. Introduction and Summary:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Georgia Department of Corrections’ standards for the use and management of social media and provide guidance on its administration and oversight.

GDC uses a number of public social media platforms to improve communication with members of the public, employees, media representatives, and other stakeholders. This policy provides the department’s standard on the official management and use of social media for departmental purposes as well as setting standards for an employee’s use of social media. This policy applies to all GDC employees and volunteers, in addition to employees of any vendor working at any GDC facility or office.

This policy does not create rights in any person nor should it be interpreted or applied in such a manner as to abridge the rights of an individual.

**II. Authority:**

**IVO14-0001:** Employee Standards of Conduct

**IVO13-0003:** Unlawful Harassment (Includes Sexual Harassment)

**III. Definitions:**

**Social Network/Media Site** - web-based services that allow individuals to create public profiles, share information and socialize with others using a range of communications technologies. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, MySpace), microblogging sites (Twitter, Nixle), photo- and video-sharing sites (Flickr, Pinterest, YouTube), wikis (Wikipedia), blogs, and news sites (Digg, Reddit).

**Inappropriate Comments:** may include topics such as advertisements or endorsements for services or products, abusive or profane language, hate speech, personal attacks, harassment or threats of violence, libelous or slanderous statements against GDC or its employees, statements that threaten the security of GDC

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operations or facilities, statements likely to cause immediate harm or incite crime, or unlawful conduct.

**Post:** content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.

**Social Media Account:** an established profile using a social media platform for the purpose of social media use.

**Social Media Page:** the specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed, and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.

IV. **Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:**

A. **GDC Official Social Media Usage:**

1. The Public Affairs Office (PAO) oversees the:
  - a. Management, maintenance and administration of all social media sites and pages utilized for official Departmental use;
  - b. Approval of any modifications to or expansions of the social media sites and pages utilized for official Departmental use;
  - c. Monitoring of comments posted on social media sites and pages utilized for official Departmental use; and
  - d. Maintenance of social media usernames and passwords for all sites owned by GDC.
2. Social media pages utilized for official departmental use shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by GDC, and shall have GDC contact information prominently displayed or hyperlinked.

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3. Content on official GDC social media pages is subject to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all information technology and records management policies.
  - a. Content is subject to public records laws and records retention schedules.
  - b. Content must be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with open records law, e-discovery laws, and GDC policies.
4. Individual facilities, centers, or offices shall not be permitted to establish or maintain a social media page.
5. GDC maintains official social media pages to:
  - a. Provide a direct way to reach constituents and stakeholders;
  - b. Promote transparency in government;
  - c. Assist with community outreach and engagement;
  - d. Assist in making time-sensitive notifications;
  - e. Provide an additional recruitment mechanism for GDC; and
  - f. Use as an investigative tool, through the collection of evidence and information for on-going investigations.
6. GDC employees who are working undercover are prohibited from creating a social media account as an alias for the purpose of an investigation unless written approval is given by the Office of Legal Services and Office of Investigations and Compliance.

**B. Social Media Guidelines:**

Social media is an ever-evolving forum. As such, guidelines within this policy are likely to be updated as new technologies and social networking tools emerge.

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Therefore to ensure policy compliance, it is recommended that employees review the policy regularly.

1. The following speech may subject a GDC employee to personnel action if employee's social media posts:
  - a. Adversely affect the department's operations;
  - b. Interfere with an employee's performance of duties;
  - c. Impair discipline, harmony or relationships among coworkers;
  - d. Showcase obscene or sexually explicit content;
  - e. Ridicule, harass or are discriminatory in nature against an individual or group of people in regards to their race, color, religion, sex, national origin or any protected class of individuals as defined by federal law;
  - f. Include content that would reasonably be considered as reckless or irresponsible; or
  - g. Use any image or photograph of images that belong to GDC that would reflect discredit on the Department or undermine public trust **IVO14-0001: Employee Standards of Conduct**, to include: GDC patch, official logo, photos of any GDC facility, any image of an inmate (with or without consent), and any material for which GDC holds a copyright, trademark, patent or other intellectual property right.
2. Employees shall not disclose any confidential or non-public information obtained by virtue of employment. **IVO14-0001: Employee Standards of Conduct**
3. Staff are cautioned that posts that constitute a violation of **IVO14-0001: Employee Standards of Conduct** and **IVO13-0003: Unlawful Harassment (Includes Sexual Harassment)** may result in personnel action by GDC.

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**V. Attachments:**

None