



West Valley Fire-Rescue

Yakima County Fire District 12

YAKIMA COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 12
10000 ZIER ROAD
YAKIMA, WA 98908

POLICY # 2603

COMMISSION CHAIR SIGNATURE: S/B *Jim Borst*, Chair

EFFECTIVE DATE: 3/12/2024

REVISED DATE: 1/12/2016

POLICY TITLE: Member Social Media Use

REFERENCES: Policy 2601 Electronic Communication Systems,
2602 INCIDENT SCENE PHOTO'S

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To address the fast-changing landscape of digital communications, the internet and the way personnel and the public communicate and obtain information online, the District may consider using Social Media tools to communicate and reach a broader audience.

1.2 The District has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the District on Social Media sites and with digital images owned by the District. This policy establishes the District's policy on Social Media and the use and control of digital images.

1.3 Social Media is a great way to connect with others, exchange knowledge, share information and promote cooperation. However, there are also possible risks for both members and the District related to each of the various forms of social networking.

2.0 DEFINITION

"Social Media" is the term given to websites, online tools and interactive communication technologies that allow users to interact with one another

to share information, opinions, knowledge, photos and interests. Examples of Social Media include such web platforms as blogs, message boards, wikis, social and professional networking websites and content sharing sites. Non-exhaustive examples of such sites include Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

3.1 This policy applies to all Members.

3.2 Members shall ensure all online activities do not interfere with their job or the District's business. Members should be mindful that the things they say and do through Social Media may reflect poorly on them as a member and damage the District's credibility and reputation in the community. Members should always consider whether their statements are potentially damaging to the District.

3.2.1 Members are responsible for the material they post.

3.2.2 Members speaking on behalf of the District shall have prior approval from the Chief or designee, discussing District business, or using Social Media, shall be respectful if/when disagreeing with others' opinions.

4.0 POLICY

4.1 All District communication tools shall be used in ways that maintain security of the network and are professional.

4.2 Confidential information shall not be removed from the workplace or disclosed without authorization. Information published on Social Media sites shall comply with District confidentiality policies.

4.3 Members who need to engage in Social Media/networking in a District official capacity shall receive prior approval from the Fire Chief and the IT administrator when necessary.

4.4 Use of the Districts Social Media to engage in any communication that violates federal, state, or local laws or regulations, or any District policy, is strictly prohibited.

4.5 Members shall not use Social Media for personal purposes with District equipment (including District computers, tablets and phones).

4.6 Members shall not conduct any District business via Social Media without the approval of the Fire Chief.

4.7 Members may not use Social Media in any manner that would negatively impact the District's interest in the efficient performance of its workplace.

4.8 The following non-exhaustive uses of Social Media and communication tools are considered inappropriate and prohibited.

- a) Posting or releasing information that could breach the security of the District or result in District liability. This includes confidential, sensitive information (e.g., HIPAA, medical history, personal information about other members, incident reports and photos.).
- b) Attributing or implying personal statements, opinions or beliefs, pictures, official reports, etc to the District when engaging in private use of Social Media. Any Social Media communication by a member which includes any information attributed to the District shall be made clear to the readers that the views expressed are the members alone, and that they do not reflect the views of the District.
- c) Speaking on behalf of the District unless specifically authorized by the Fire Chief.
- d) Using the District's logo, proprietary graphics, or trademarks by way of the internet or any other Social Media outlets without the permission of the Fire Chief.
- e) Using the District's communication tools to access, receive, or send pornographic, sexually explicit, or obscene materials.
- f) Members shall not make comments or statements about officials, co-workers, or members of the District that would violate the Districts non-discrimination/non-harassment policies, including statements that are insulting, offensive, derogatory, profane, discriminatory, sexually explicit, and or disparaging towards others based on their sex, race, age, national origin, religion sexual orientation or any other class protected by law.
- g) Using Social Media outlets to defame or discredit the services of the District or those whom the District serves, vendors or members.
- h) Impacting the performance of the Districts network.
- i) Using the District Social Media or communication tools for political purposes, including partisan campaigning.
- j) Using the District Social Media to deliberately propagate any virus, malware, spyware or any other file designed to disable or otherwise harm the network system.

- k) Using the Districts Social Media or communication tools for any personal use even if incidental, that results in an expense to the District.
- l) Violations of any other District Policies.

4.9 All software, programs, applications, templates, data files, and web pages on District computer systems, media storage or materials developed on District computer systems are the property of the District. The District can access, copy, modify, destroy and delete this property. Members have no reasonable expectation of privacy when using District owned or provided devices or networks. The District reserves the right to monitor use of its devices or networks, including but not limited to internet access and Social Media use; to retrieve data from third party service providers paid by the District; and to shut down, without prior notice, any District sponsored Social Media platform for any reason, and to delete content on its Social Media sites without providing a reason or notification at its sole discretion. The District further reserves the right to block access from its networks and assets to any internet site at its sole discretion as permitted by applicable law.

4.10 Discussion of a member's employment with the District is not appropriate for Social Media. Resolving complaints about work-related problems are best solved by speaking directly to the individual, supervisors or admin. Staff.

4.11 Off-Duty personal use of Social Media by members is not prohibited; however, members are reminded that District rules and policies apply to Social media conduct to the same degree as other off-duty conduct.

4.12 Members are personally responsible for the content they publish on-line, whether a blog, Social Media site or any other form of user-generated media. Members shall be mindful that what they publish will be public for a long time.

4.13 When a member discusses District related matters on Social Media they must identify themselves by name and role in District then make clear they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the District.

- a. If a member publishes online relevant to the District in their personal capacity, they shall use a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Yakima County Fire District 12's positions, strategies or opinions."

4.14 Be respectful to the District, other members and the general public. Respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.

5.0 VIOLATIONS

5.1 Any misuse of the District's network or District's equipment shall be immediately reported to the immediate supervisor.

5.2 Any violations to this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination per policy 2101.