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			Distribution: All
Title: Social Media Program		Section: Programs	
Issued: 4/24/2012	Effective: 5/2/2012	Revised: 10/22/2021	
Rescinds: All Previous		Amends:	
CALEA References: LE 54.1.1g			
Review: Annual	Authority: Chief Buck Buchanan		

Rev. 12162020 **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this General Order is to provide guidelines and to establish criteria for the Andover Police Department’s (“Department”) Social Media program. Social Media is beneficial for connecting with the community and is an avenue for community members to contact and exchange information with the Department.


Rev. 12162020 **II. Policy**

The Department endorses the secure use of Social Media to enhance communication, collaboration and the exchange of information between the Department and the community. The Department’s policy is that Social Media be used as a resource for outreach, problem-solving, investigation, public awareness, crime prevention and other related objectives.

Rev. 12162020 **III. Definitions**

- A. Blog:** A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions, or comments.
- B. Post:** Content an individual shares on a Social Media or the act of publishing content on a website.
- C. Social Media:** Media designed to be disseminated through social interaction that uses internet and web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues into Social Media dialogues.
- D. Social Networking Websites:** A website that provides a social structure made of individuals (or organizations), which are tied (connected) by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, kinship, financial exchange, dislike, or relationships of beliefs, knowledge or prestige.
- E. Social Networking:** The practice of expanding the number of one’s business and/or social contacts by making connections through individuals.
- F. Social Media Strategist:** Authorized users designated by the Chief of Police who may utilize Social Media on behalf of the department.

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IV. Regulations

- Rev. 12162020 **A.** Members shall conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the Department and, accordingly, shall adhere to all Department standards of conduct, observe conventionally accepted protocols and maintain proper decorum when posting on Department Social Media websites/pages [B].
- Rev. 12162020 **B.** Members shall not make statements about the guilt or innocence of any suspect(s) or arrestee(s), or make comments concerning pending prosecutions; nor post, transmit or otherwise disseminate confidential information, including photographs or videos, related to Department training, activities or work related assignments without permission from the Chief of Police or his or her designee [B].
- Rev. 12162020 **C.** Members shall not use personally owned devices to post on the Department's Social Media websites/pages unless authorized by the Chief of Police or their designee [B].
- Rev. 12162020 **D.** Employees are prohibited from posting, transmitting, and/or disseminating any pictures, audio recordings or videos of Department training, activities, or work related assignments on personal web pages, Social Media websites, social networking sites or other internet sites without the express written consent of the Chief of Police [A].
- Rev. 12162020 **E.** Members will adhere to 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 a supervisor prior to posting [B].
- Rev. 12162020 **F.** Requests to post information over the Department's Social Media by members who are not authorized to post should be made through the member's chain of command [A].
- Rev. 12162020 **G.** Members shall observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, and service mark restrictions in posting materials to Social Media [A].

V. Procedures

A. Guidelines (LE 54.1.1g)

- Rev. 12162020 1. All Department Social Media websites and/or pages shall be approved by the Chief of Police or their designee.
- Rev. 12162020 2. The Department's Community Outreach Coordinator will administer and oversee all Department Social Media websites and/or pages.
- Rev. 12162020 3. An approved member(s) will monitor Social Media websites and will take appropriate action against posts or comments that violate terms outlined in this General Order.
- Rev. 12162020 4. The Social Media websites and/or pages, whenever possible, shall clearly indicate:


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- a. They are maintained by the Department and shall have the Department contact information prominently displayed.
 - b. Each Social Media website shall include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and scope of the Department's presence on the website.
 - c. Each Social Media website shall include the Department's mission statement, Social Media disclaimer, and post and comment policy.
 - i. Social Media websites should state that the opinions expressed by visitors to the page(s) do not reflect the opinion of the Department.
 - ii. Social Media websites shall clearly indicate that posted comments will be monitored and that the Department reserves the right to remove obscenities, discriminatory off topic comments and personal attacks.
 - iii. Social Media websites shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure.
 - d. Each website(s) should link to the City of Andover, Kansas and the Department's official website.
5. Social Media websites and/or pages shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.
- a. Content is subject to public records laws. Relevant record's retention schedules apply to Social Media content.
 - b. Content must be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with open records laws.
6. Department members representing the Department via Social Media websites shall do the following:
- a. Members shall conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the Department and, accordingly, shall adhere to all Department standards of conduct, observe conventionally accepted protocols, and maintain proper decorum when posting on Department Social Media websites/pages.
 - b. Members shall identify themselves as members of the Department unless acting in an undercover capacity and with prior approval from the Chief of Police or their designee.
 - c. Members shall not make statements about the guilt or innocence of any suspect(s) or arrestee(s), or make comments concerning pending prosecutions; nor post, transmit or otherwise disseminate confidential information, including photographs or videos, related to Department training, activities or work related assignments without permission from the Chief of Police or their designee.
 - d. Members shall adhere to the guidelines outlined in General Order O2109 - Public Information when making media releases.

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B. Using Social Media Websites/Pages


1. Social Media is a valuable investigative tool when seeking evidence or information about crime in general, to include:
 - a. Missing persons;
 - b. Wanted persons;
 - c. Gang participation;
 - d. Online crimes (i.e., cyber bullying and cyber stalking); and
 - e. Photos or videos of a crime posted by a participant or witness.
2. Social Media can be used for community outreach/awareness programs that are offered by the Department, to include:
 - a. Providing crime prevention tips;
 - b. Offering online reporting programs (i.e., Crime Stoppers); and
 - c. Crime data information (i.e., crime reports).
3. Social Media can be used to make time sensitive notifications to include:
 - a. Weather emergencies;
 - b. Road closures;
 - c. Traffic issues; and
 - d. Special events.
4. Prohibited content includes:
 - a. Content that is offensive, discriminatory, inflammatory or sexually explicit;
 - b. Any information that violates individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and rights provided under state, federal or local laws;
 - c. Any information that would knowingly compromise an ongoing investigation;
 - d. Any information that could compromise the safety and security of Department operations, members of the Department, victims, suspects or the public;
 - e. Any content posted for personal use; and
 - f. Any content that has not been properly authorized by this policy or a supervisor.

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C. Operation

1. Communications Officers will monitor the Department's main Social Media websites and/or pages.
 - a. Communications Officers are encouraged to post comments to include:
 - i. Weather emergencies (i.e., thunderstorm watches and warnings, tornado watches and warnings, and significant weather advisories);
 - ii. Motor vehicle accidents and traffic issues;
 - iii. Road closures that affect travel in the city; and

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iv. Commentary and/or courtesies that are upbeat, positive, and socially acceptable.

b. Communications Officers should monitor posts and comments and take action against posts and comments that violate terms of the post and comment policy and the disclaimer, when possible.

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2. Members that have a Social Media website and/or page that involves their special assignment will monitor posts and comments and take appropriate action against posts and comments that violate terms of the post and comment policy and the disclaimer, when possible.

a. Social Media Strategists are encouraged to post comments to include:

- i. Announcements/special events;
- ii. Tips and information related to crime prevention;
- iii. Investigative requests for information;
- iv. Requests that ask the community to engage in projects that are relevant to the Department's mission;
- v. Real-time safety information that is related to in-progress crimes, geographical warning, or disaster information;
- vi. Traffic information; and
- vii. Any relevant information to enhance public awareness.

3. Any member who becomes aware of content on any Social Media website authorized by the Department, that they believe is unauthorized or inappropriate should promptly report such content to a supervisor. The supervisor will ensure the Chief of Police and Community Outreach Coordinator are notified immediately.

4. The Community Outreach Coordinator will monitor the use of all Department Social Media. At a minimum, the Community Outreach Coordinator will review the resources being used, the effectiveness of the content, and any unauthorized or inappropriate content.

5. The Community Outreach Coordinator will be responsible for providing the Chief of Police with quarterly statistics and/or a summary of activity from Social Media websites/pages.

D. Training

1. At a minimum, authorized Social Media Strategists will receive training on the following topics:

- a. Legal issues;
- b. Appropriate use of Social Media websites;
- c. Privacy and civil rights; and
- d. Dissemination and retention of information posted on Department websites.