



GENERAL ORDER

**DURHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT
DURHAM, NC**

NUMBER:

2032 R-2

SOCIAL MEDIA

Effective Date: 01/31/2011

Revision Dates: R-1 05/16/2016; **R-2 04/24/2017**

INTRODUCTION

The Durham Police Department recognizes the rights of public employees to comment, as citizens, on matters of public interest, as well the need to balance such rights with the interests of the City in promoting the efficiency of the public services it provides.

DEFINITIONS

Matters of Public Concern – matters involving issues of social, political, or other interest to a community, as opposed to personal grievances and individualized concerns.

Post – content that is shared or published on social media.

Profile – a concise biographical sketch utilized in social media.

Social Media – forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content.

Social Networking – the creation and maintenance of personal and business relationships.

DEPARTMENT SOCIAL MEDIA

The Durham Police Department Public Affairs Unit is responsible for maintaining and managing all Department social media. The City and the Department's Public Affairs Unit retain the right to restrict content on, and access to, City maintained social media forums.

Employees are permitted to share content from City and Department maintained social media sites on their personal sites.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Department values and acknowledges the benefits of employee participation in professional occupational social networking sites, e.g. LinkedIn, NC SOG (NC School of Government) and hence, no provision of this general order is intended to deter or prohibit employees from accessing or posting to these sites to accomplish an employment or law enforcement related objective.

Personal use of social media occurs when the electronic communication shared is outside the scope of the employee's work-related duties and responsibilities.

Employees should not assume that content on social media is private. Members should monitor content on their social networking sites with the expectation that the information may at some point be viewed by City officials, supervisors, staff and co-workers, as well as members of the public, such as the media, defense counsel, criminal suspects and defendants. Members should consider the possible adverse consequences that social media content may have on their professional activities, such as future employment opportunities, credibility as a witness, and public as well as private reputation. Members are also cautioned to carefully consider the impact that social media content may have on their personal safety and the safety of co-workers. Members who choose to identify themselves, either directly or indirectly, as members of the Durham Police Department are encouraged to utilize available security and privacy settings. Members who post photographs or images identifying sworn law enforcement officers are expected to remove such content upon the request of the officer.

As representatives of the City, the Durham Police Department, and the law enforcement profession, Department members are required to maintain professionalism in their conduct both on- and off-duty.

Absent authorization from the Chief of Police, members may not represent their opinions or comments on social media as that of the City of Durham or the Durham Police Department, or as an official of the City or Police Department. When engaging in the personal use of social media, members may not

- disparage or criticize the City, the Department, its members, officials, and community with which it works and serves, or
- display content which is sexually explicit, violent, or discriminatory or derogatory towards individuals based upon race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation

unless the speech is a matter of public concern and does not create an actual impairment or disruption to the efficiency of the Department.

When engaging in the personal use of social media, members may not utilize or include City or Department uniforms, equipment, badges, patches or logos, except:

- in association with City and/or Department sponsored or affiliated events such as graduations, promotional ceremonies, and honor guard activities;
- in association with community events which City and/or Department members are participating and/or attending in an official capacity;
- in association with professional interactions with community members which do not relate to or arise from criminal or criminal intelligence investigations or law enforcement training activities; or
- on matters of public concern when the speech does not create an actual impairment or disruption to the efficiency of the department.

Unless acting in the performance of their duties or as otherwise required by law, members are prohibited from disclosing, releasing or in any manner disseminating on social media:

- Records of criminal or criminal intelligence investigations as defined by [N.C.G.S. § 132-1.4](#);
- Personnel records as defined by [N.C.G.S. § 160A-168](#); and
- City and Department records which are not public records, or are records the release of which is limited or prohibited by law.

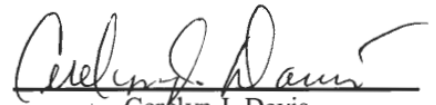
Employees will be held responsible for the content of their personal social media sites and are obligated to remove material contributed by others that would violate this policy had the material been posted by the employee.

USE OF CITY/DEPARTMENT ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

City computers, cell phones, and audio or video equipment shall not be utilized for the personal use of social media.

ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS

Employees may be required to provide the Department with access to personal social media in which they participate or maintain if a complaint has been received or they are subject to an administrative investigation relating to those sites.


Cerelyn J. Davis
Chief of Police