STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

POLICY DIRECTIVE 2014-1 26 August 2014

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE AND PARAMETERS FOR THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

1. As Adjutant General, I seek to have the State of Hawaii, Department of Defense leverage the wide ranging benefits that social media provides as an effective communication tool for supporting our organizational mission and communication strategy. This policy directive addresses the use of social media (both official as well as unofficial personal sites) for the employees of the State of Hawaii, Department of Defense to include members of the Hawaii National Guard. Social media involves sharing information in a public forum by all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet. Proper use of social media can foster external transparency and internal collaboration. This policy also sets forth appropriate security and privacy safeguards for the Department and its individual users.

2. The State of Hawaii, Department of Defense provides tremendous support to the State of Hawaii, our Nation and our partners around the globe. Timely and responsible use of social media can share and highlight such accomplishments, enhancing the reputation of our Department and its people and furthering trust within the community. I encourage all divisions [Hawaii Air National Guard (HIANG), Hawaii Army National Guard (HIARNG), Hawaii State Civil Defense, Youth Challenge Academy, Office of Veterans Services and Office of Homeland Security] and subordinate sections to maintain official social media sites and provide frequent content. Note that official social media posts involve content released and/or reviewed in an official capacity by a Public Affairs representative. If any corrections or edits to official posts already published need to be made, it should be brought to the attention of the departmental Public Affairs Office (HIPAO).

3. Each division will ensure its official site is properly registered and its official site managers are current on training and familiar with official social media handbooks. All official sites must be registered through the HIPAO who in turn will assist site managers with registering with appropriate higher echelons (e.g., HIANG/HIARNG with Department of Defense). Official site managers should regularly consult HIPAO to ensure they and their sites remain up to date on trends and developments.

4. Ultimately, divisional leadership is responsible for what is posted online. Information should not be released via social media on official sites unless it has been verified as factual using the standard approval process for releasing information (i.e., commander or other leadership has signed off on it or HIPAO/division public affairs has approved it).

5. Whether or not one participates in social networking is an individual's personal decision. Employees of the department and members of the Hawaii National Guard most certainly may post on non-department sites and have personal social media sites. Use of social media though presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities.

6. Personal sites may not be represented as an official Department of Defense or National Guard site. Unofficial posts are not initiated by any part of the Hawaii Department of Defense or reviewed within any official department approval process. Any individuals not officially authorized to speak on behalf of the Department should make it clear through a disclaimer that the statements are their own and do not represent an official stance of the Department of Defense, their division or the National Guard. Everyone should understand and appreciate the power and possible unfavorable consequences of posting certain material on unofficial social media. Posts done on personal pages, when seen as representing the organization or not, may cause harm to the Department and its employees.

7. If posting, I encourage you to be respectful, honest and accurate. I have genuine concern on the impact to the Department and others if an individual within the organization posts content that may cause harm or result in unfavorable effects. Most notably, well-developed systems are in place for official notification of next of kin and public release of information related to a casualty or serious accident. Making a post prematurely, referencing serious incidents that bypasses such established measures, is inexcusable. No individual or unit should make any comment or post, whether it be to media or social media until the name of the hero has been officially released by the Department of Defense. A media release from the HIPAO will immediately follow the DOD announcement to let the Hawaii public know about the individual and the event.

8. All employees must maintain operational security and not disclose information about confidential agency business on agency social media sites or their personal social media sites. Posting internal documents or information that has not been officially released to the public is prohibited, including investigatory information, pre-decisional materials, internal memorandums and e-mail. Moreover, we should follow the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and all other privacy protection laws, as well as respect laws involving copyright and public records. Likewise, avoid use of Army or Air Force affiliation, official title or position to promote, endorse or benefit yourself or any profit-making group or agency.

9. Information posted to personal profiles resides in the public domains. In addition to inaccuracies, rumors and Operational Security violations can have lasting unfavorable effects. Imagery that may negatively impact the reputation of the Hawaii Department of Defense must be avoided. Examples may include, but are not limited to: inappropriate wear of the uniform; inappropriate or unprofessional behavior while wearing the uniform; inappropriate racial, ethnic, religious, gender or sexual orientation slurs while appearing to be in an official capacity; and, inappropriate activity of an obscene or sexual nature while appearing to be in an official capacity.

10. This policy does not seek to infringe upon any member's First Amendment right to free speech. There are potential consequences though for misuse of social media. Inappropriate postings that include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence will not be tolerated. Posting inappropriate content on a social media platform that may cause harm or damage the reputation of the Department or individuals will be addressed. If an employee (full-time, part-time or traditional soldier/airman) makes inappropriate posts on a social media platform, a Public Affairs representative and/or supervisor is authorized to contact that individual to make recommended changes. Supervisors or the chain of command may weigh the severity of the post, its nexus to the Department, and an individual's responsiveness when considering action.

11. Inappropriate content posted on personal pages may violate federal or state law. Numerous punitive provisions of the Hawaii and Uniform Code of Military Justice and Technician Personnel Regulation can potentially be applied to individual social media misuse. Offenders may face a full range of disciplinary measures tailored to the facts and circumstances. It can result in adverse or disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Inappropriate postings can impact an employee's suitability to acquire or maintain a security clearance.

12. An Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) soldier or airman may not engage in any partisan political activity via any social media platform. Further, an AGR member may not post or make direct links to a political party, partisan political candidate, campaign, group, or cause because such activity is the equivalent of distributing literature on behalf of those entities or individuals.

13. Social media tools are increasingly important in emergency management communications to extend the reach of official communications. Nevertheless, even in times of crisis, disaster or emergency, only employees with the authority to speak on behalf of the Department are permitted to do so. To limit confusion and disinformation, others who choose to share information during such events are advised to not only include a disclaimer but take the time to verify that the source of the information and any forwarded link are legitimate.

14. Leaders and supervisors are entrusted and responsible for enforcement and awareness of this policy. Posting this directive and providing periodic briefings will assist our Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees with identifying possible violations and consequences. Posting this directive and ensuring social media training is completed will assist our team in being able to take advantage of the power of social media.

15. For questions and comments related to this policy directive, please contact the HIPAO at (808) 733-4258.

DARRYLL D. M. WONG, Maj Gen, HING
Adjutant General

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