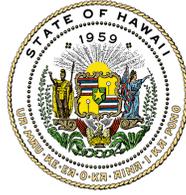


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POLICY DIRECTIVE 2026-01

20 January 2026

SUBJECT: Social Media Policy- Guidance and Parameters for the Use of Social Media

1. Effective 20 January 2026, Supersedes Policy Directive 2019-01 dated 29 July 2019.
2. Applicability. This policy directive applies to all Hawaii National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, as well as all State of Hawaii, Department of Defense (HIDOD) Divisions and Staff Offices, Hawaii Emergency Management Agency, Office of Veterans' Services, Civilian Military Programs and supporting DOD state offices.
3. Purpose. This policy directive addresses the use of social media (both official as well as unofficial personal sites) for the employees of the DOD to include members of the Hawaii National Guard.
4. References.
 - 2019 HIDOD Social Media Policy Directive - Signed by Maj. Gen. Logan Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 124A (Hawaii Code of Military Justice) Manual for Courts-Martial, United States (2016 Edition), Part IV, Punitive Articles.
 - 2014 HIDOD Social Media Policy Directive - Signed by Maj. Gen. Wong Hawaii Revised Statutes, Chapter 124A (Hawaii Code of Military Justice) Manual for Courts-Martial, United States (2016 Edition), Part IV, Punitive Articles.
 - DOD Official Use of Social Media Principles
 - State of Hawaii, Office of Enterprise Technology Services: Social Media Guidelines
 - State of Hawaii, Department of Human Resources Development
 - DODI 5400.17 Official Use of Social Media for Public Affairs
 - DODI 8170.01 Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging
 - DODI 5230.09 Clearance of DOD Information for Public Release
 - Hatch Act Guidance on Social Media
 - DOD 1344.10 - Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces
 - AR-360-1 The Army Public Affairs Program, Chapter 8
 - AR 600-20 Army Command Policy
 - AR 25-13 Army Telecommunications and Unified Capabilities
 - DODI 1300.18 - Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies, and Procedures DTM 09-026, Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-Based Capabilities

- AFI 35-101 - Public Affairs Mission
- AFI 1-1 Air Force Standards
- AFI 35-113 - Command Information

5. General. As the Adjutant General, I want to enable HIDOD to leverage the wide-ranging benefits that social media provides as an effective communication tool for supporting our organizational mission and communication strategy.

a. Purpose

- i. To deliver public information and have consumer value
- ii. Communicate directly with the public without a filter
- iii. Increase government transparency and efficiency

b. Social media involves sharing information in a public forum 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.

c. This policy also sets forth appropriate security and privacy safeguards for HIDOD and its individual users.

d. Social media is inherently risky. Division-level leadership must understand that they are assuming some risks when posting online, which can result in communication errors, audience misinterpretation and other unintended consequences. With the right knowledge, tools and approach, you can minimize these risks while maintaining public communication with your audience.

e. 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 to maintain official social media sites and provide frequent content.

f. Mis-Dis-Mal Information: HIDOD's social media presence needs to be a trusted voice in the public domain. With transparency and facts as our foundation, vigilance is still needed to combat Mis-Dis-Mal information. Please verify sources prior to sharing on official pages in order to combat the spread of inaccurate and potentially harmful messaging. If Mis-Dis-Mal information is seen on official pages, notify State Public Affairs Office (PAO) immediately.

g. Official social media posts involve content released and/or reviewed in an official capacity by a Public Affairs representative or approved Social Media Administrator. If any corrections or edits to official posts already published need to be made, it should be brought to the attention of the PAO.

- h. Transparency: Social media account managers/admins will not remove social media content from official accounts unless there is a factual or typographical error, violation of a law, policy, term of service, user agreement, or an operations or information security concern. Removal of content will be publicly acknowledged and communicated to audiences to provide context and appropriate clarification for the action. Managers/admins must persistently monitor, communicate, and, where appropriate, responsively engage with users regarding such removal. Removal of content can unintentionally discredit DOD information if the action appears to be taken to avoid embarrassment, stifle or silence discussion about a controversial topic, or mislead users to believe an issue is inconsequential or of minor significance.

6. Policy.

- a. Establish Need: New official accounts should only be established if a specific communications outcome cannot be fulfilled by an existing account(s) or other means of communication. More is not necessarily better.
- b. All new social media sites must be requested through PAO.
- c. Registration: Each division will ensure its official sites are properly registered through PAO. Official site managers will need to be current on training with PAO and be familiar with official social media handbooks. Managers should regularly consult PAO to ensure they and their sites remain up to date on trends and developments. Media Plans are to be updated annually.
- d. Release Authority: Divisional leadership is responsible for what is posted on their social media sites. Information should not be released via social media on official sites unless it has been verified as factual, and an approved member (named by director/commander or other leadership has approved it or PAO/division public affairs has approved it).
 - i. Content related to any foreign entities (including Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia, and more) must go to PAO for approval prior to posting on any social media platforms.
 - ii. Divisional Directors and/or Commanders may delegate release authority to their public affairs/social media teams. This list will be maintained by PAO.
 - iii. For official Hawai'i National Guard (HING) unit social media sites (not installations or organizations), Commanders may designate PA qualified personnel as social media administrators.
 - All HING unit pages must have a PA qualified member review and approval on all posts. If these unit pages cannot meet that criteria, the page/site/account must be unpublished or converted to a "group" or unofficial account.
 - A list of the authorized unit pages will be tracked at the State PAO level.

- Units that do not have a PAOs to review and approve, may change their social media accounts to unofficial, by making the Facebook page a “Group” or the Instagram account private. Additionally, they must be labelled as unofficial in the bio. State PAO can assist in these transitions.
 - HING unit pages must only publish posts that support the DOD priorities: Please contact State PAO for detailed and updated information on these priorities.
- e. Choice: 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 maintain personal social media sites. Use of social media presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities.
- f. Unofficial Posts - Personal sites may not be represented as an official DOD or National Guard site. Unofficial posts are not initiated by any part of the DOD or reviewed within any official department approval process. Any individual not officially authorized to speak on behalf of the DOD should make it clear through a disclaimer, on their own site, that the statements are their own and do not represent an official stance of the DOD, 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 DOD and its employees.
- g. Be Respectful: If posting, I encourage you to be respectful, honest and accurate. I have genuine concern regarding the impact on HIDOD and others if an individual within the organization posts content that may cause harm or result in unfavorable effects.
- i. 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 DOD. A media release from the PAO will immediately follow the DOD announcement to let the Hawaii public know about the individual and the event.
- ii. Accidents, news inquiries and investigations - Only PAO and designated representatives can provide public statements, including social media posts.
- h. Operational Security: 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.

- i. Moreover, we should follow the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 and all other privacy protection laws, as well as respect laws involving copyright and public records.
- ii. 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.
- i. Effects: Information posted to personal profiles resides in the public domain. Even if deleted, posts can still live on the internet. Inaccuracies, rumors and operational security violations can have lasting unfavorable effects. Imagery and content that may negatively impact the reputation of HIDOD, or which may be prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the Hawaii National Guard 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.

- j. Rights: 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.
 - i. Inappropriate postings that include discriminatory remarks, harassment, threats of violence, or that may be viewed as disparaging of the chain of command, up to and including the Governor of the State of Hawaii, will not be tolerated, especially while on any kind of status or using government property.
 - ii. Posting inappropriate content on a social media platform that may cause harm, damage the reputation of the DOD or individuals, or that may be prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the Hawaii National Guard will be addressed.
 - iii. Posting of inappropriate, discriminatory remarks, harassment, threats of violence, or that may be viewed as disparaging of the chain of command, up to and including the Governor of the State of Hawaii while on any kind of status or using government property will be addressed.
 - iv. If an employee (full- time, part-time or traditional soldier/airman) makes inappropriate posts on an official social media platform, a Public Affairs representative and/or supervisor is authorized to contact that individual to make recommended changes or edit the post.

- v. Supervisors or the chain of command may weigh the severity of the post, its nexus to the DOD, and an individual's responsiveness when considering action.
- k. Actions: Inappropriate content posted on personal pages, particularly when said content has a discernable nexus to the Hawaii National Guard, may violate federal or state law.
 - i. Numerous punitive provisions of the Hawaii and Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) can potentially be applied to individual social media misuse to include: HRS §124B-1 Contempt towards officials (See also, UCMJ Art. 88); HRS §124B-145, Disrespect towards superior commissioned officer (See also, UCMJ Art. 89); HRS §124B-148, Failure to obey order or regulation (See also, UCMJ Art. 92); HRS §124B-183, Provoking speeches or gestures (See also, UCMJ Art. 117); HRS §124B-195, Conduct unbecoming an officer (See also, UCMJ Art. 133); and HRS §124B-196, General article (See also, UCMJ Art. 134).
 - ii. Conduct and Professionalism: Soldiers, Airmen and HING employees are expected to uphold Army and Air Force Values and standards of conduct online and offline, treating everyone with dignity and respect. Using official accounts for personal gain is forbidden. Using sensitive information available through certain positions should not be shared online or associated with opinion posts on personal pages/platforms.
 - iii. State Employee Specific: State personnel should be mindful that they represent HIDOD and the State when working in their official capacity while online.
 - State personnel are subject to all agency and State requirements addressing prohibited or inappropriate behavior in the workplace, including acceptable use policies, user agreements, sexual harassment policies, etc.
 - Content shall be clear, direct, positive, honest, and ethical.
 - Do not post content that is graphic, vulgar, obscene, explicit, profane, sexually explicit, racial comments or submissions, abusive, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
 - Do not misuse your position for your own gain or to assist others inappropriately.
 - Do not post content that you would not say in a speech given in your official capacity.
 - Prohibited Conduct listed in SOH DHRD Discrimination/Harassment Free Workplace Policy
 - Harassing or offensive conduct directed at individuals based on protected class characteristics is prohibited.

- Demeaning, insulting, or intimidating written, recorded, or electronically transmitted messages (such as email, text messages, voicemail, and Internet materials) relating to any protected class.
- iv. HIARNG Specific: The U.S. Army defines online conduct as the use of electronic communications in an official or personal capacity in a manner that is consistent with Army values and standards of conduct as outlined in AR 600-20.
- Online misconduct. The use of electronic communication to inflict harm. Electronic communication is the transfer of information (signs, writing, images, sounds, or data) transmitted by computer, phone or other electronic device.
 - Electronic communications include, but are not limited to: text messages, emails, chats, instant messaging, screensavers, blogs, social media sites, electronic device applications and Web/video conferencing.
 - Examples of online misconduct include, but are not limited to: hazing, bullying, harassment, discriminatory harassment, stalking, retaliation or any other types of misconduct that undermines dignity and respect.
 - It is important that all Soldiers know that when they are logged on to a social media platform, they still represent the U.S. Army. Soldiers using social media must always abide by the HCMJ, even when off duty.
 - Commenting, posting and linking to material that violates the HCMJ or basic rules of Soldier conduct are prohibited, along with talking negatively about supervisors or releasing sensitive information.
 - IAW AR 600-20, para 4-16, Hazing, bullying, online misconduct, and other acts of misconduct, undermine trust, violate our ethic, and negatively impact command climate and readiness.
 - Bullying is evaluated by a reasonable person standard and includes, but is not limited to, the following: Intimidating, teasing, name calling, mockery, threats of violence, harassment, taunting, social exclusion, isolating, manipulating, blackmailing, and spreading rumors in which there is a power differential, whether by rank, position, physical stature, social standing or other measures, between the aggressor and the victim.
- v. HIANG Specific: The guidance for social media usage for Air Force and Space Force personnel, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve members and civilian employees was recently changed and consolidated into Air Force Instruction 35-101, paragraph 1.15.2.

- Avoid offensive/inappropriate behavior that could bring discredit upon the Air Force or you as a member of the Air Force, or that would otherwise be harmful to good order and discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion, morale, mission accomplishment, etc.
 - Make any commitment to provide official Air Force information to any non-DoD member or agency, including news media, without first coordinating with public affairs.
 - Post any non-public information. This includes but not limited to classified or sensitive information, unless such release is a protected disclosure per an appropriate whistleblower statute.
- vi. In addition, the 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.
- vii. Inappropriate postings can impact an employee's suitability to acquire or maintain a security clearance.
- l. Political Posts- Official social media sites should be void of any political posts, whether in an election season or not. Political posts on personal social media platforms are allowed, however, depending on what status a HING member is currently in, there may be restrictions. DOD military employees will follow all Hatch Act policies that apply.
- i. State employees, during official work hours, may NOT use any state equipment for personal political posts, or any actions of endorsing/campaigning. State employees may use personal equipment for political posts on their personal time. Decorum as related to current leadership, is still expected.
 - ii. Active Guard Reserve (AGR) and Federal Technicians (Techs), (Soldiers, Airmen, or Title 5 Civilians) while on duty or in the workplace, may NOT use any government equipment for personal political posts, any actions of endorsing or campaigning. AGRs or Techs may use personal equipment for political posts on their personal time. Decorum as related to current leadership, is still expected.
 - iii. DOD employees may NOT use official social media platforms to knowingly solicit, accept, or receive a political contribution for a political party, candidate in a partisan race, or partisan political group or use their official authority or influence to affect the outcome of an election.
 - iv. While managing official social media platforms, DOD employees 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.

- m. Sharing during emergencies - 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 DOD are permitted to do so. To limit confusion and disinformation, others who choose to share information during such events are advised to share official posts or not only include a disclaimer but take the time to verify that the source of the information and any forwarded link are legitimate.
 - n. Social Media Administrators- Administrators must be approved by division leadership. If not, the page/site should be taken offline until approved admins can be designated. Admins have the power to create and delete posts, respond to or delete messages, and delete all other admins or content providers. Admins should be chosen with consideration and trust.
 - i. State PAO will request to be added as an admin on every page. Divisions/Offices/Units will process those requests in a timely manner.
 - ii. State PAO will review pages for quality control, perform back-up admin duties during absence and for emergencies. Page admins will respond to PAO queries about editing or removing content.
 - iii. Admins and content providers will register with the PAO, participate in all required training and relinquish admin rights when leaving the organization or unit.
 - iv. A social media plan is required for each social media site. PAO will collect these plans and provide resources and assistance as necessary. Plans will be updated annually.
 - o. Under the Hawai'i Uniform Information Practices Act, social media posts are considered electronic records of government activity; deletion of posts and/or accounts without proper record keeping can violate standards established by state government. Comments or messages by the public on official DOD pages will not be deleted if they do not meet site standards, but they will be hidden.
7. Responsibilities. 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.

NGHI-PAO

SUBJECT: Guidance and Parameters for Use of Social Media

- a. Reporting Misconduct: Online misconduct should be reported through the (HIDOD or HING) chains of command, family support services or other avenues like the Equal Employment Opportunity office or Inspector General.
 - b. In summary, this HIDOD Social Media policy emphasizes responsible online conduct, security, and adherence to regulations, upholding the values expected of HIDOD employees and HING service members.
 - c. Soldiers and Airmen represent the Hawai'i National Guard at all times, even when off-duty and on social media.
8. Definitions. None.
9. Proponent. NGHI-PAO



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