| DSB Logo | **Washington State**  **Department of Services for the Blind** |
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| TITLE: | **Human Resources**  **Social Media or Networking Policy** |
| POLICY NO: | 204.90 |
| APPLIES TO: | REPRESENTED & NON-REPRESENTED |
| LAWS: | [DSB Policy 401.00: Information Technology Resources](P:\\Information Technology\\401 00 Information Technology Resources.doc)  [DSB Policy 209.10: Ethical Conduct for Employees](file:///C:\Users\kricox\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\SSPHGMNC\Ethics%20Policy%20DSB%20209.10.docx) |
| WACS and References: | [WAC 292.110.010](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=292) (Use of state resources)  [RCW 42.52.160](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.52.160) (Ethics in public service)  [RCW 42.52.180](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.52.180) (Use of public resources)  [RCW 42.56](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.56) (Public Records Act) |
| EFFECTIVE DATE: | 10/22/2015 |
| APPROVAL: | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ October 22,2015  Lou Oma Durand, Executive Director Date  POLICY  PROCEDURE |

# PURPOSE

This policy is to define and establish the appropriate use of social media in the workplace.

# DEFINITIONS

## Social media or social networking:

This refers to the use of the Internet for blogging, microblogging, media sharing, photo sharing, video sharing, wikis, discussion boards, and social networking. Social media include text, images, audio, and video. Some examples of social media are:

* Blogs, and micro-blogs such as WordPress and Twitter.
* Social networks, such as Facebook and MySpace.
* Professional networks, such as Linkedin.
* Video sharing, such as YouTube and vlogs (video weblogs).
* Audio sharing, such as podcasts.
* Photo sharing, such as Flickr and Photobucket.
* Social bookmarking, such as Digg and Delicious.

## Agency Social Media:

Social media accounts in the name of Washington State Department of Services for the Blind or DSB used to communicate agency messages to the public.

## Personal Social Media:

Social media accounts using the name of an individual (or their pseudonym or nickname) used to interact with family, friends, and other personal connections.

## Professional Use:

The use of personal accounts on professional networking social media outlets for approved agency purposes to support the mission of the agency.

# AGENCY SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT

The DSB Communications Office is responsible for establishing and supervising all social media accounts for the agency. These accounts are considered agency tools. Individual employees may not establish DSB-sponsored social media accounts.

The DSB Communications Office, at the direction of the Agency Director or designee(s), is responsible for establishing and monitoring content, security, and records retention on all social media accounts for the agency.

The posting and maintenance of content on DSB-sponsored social media accounts is limited to Social Media Representatives designated by the Communications Office. Only Social Media Representatives are permitted to log on and/or upload content to DSB-sponsored social media accounts. Social media account management will take place during paid work hours using state equipment, the only exception is that of the Communications Office’s time and usage.

If DSB hosts multiple participant forums, that forum must be secure and private to maintain confidentiality. Facebook does not meet this criterion. This requires supervisory and IT advanced approval.

# PERMITTED USE

* Staff may use social media only for approved agency purposes, including professional networking to support the mission of the agency.
* Professional use of personal accounts on professional social media networks – such as the use of LinkedIn accounts to connect participants and potential employers on behalf of the agency – is permitted.
* DSB does not take a position on staff personal use of social media outside the workplace (that is, using personal time and resources). It is the agency’s obligation, however, to inform staff to be responsible regarding communications involving the agency, employees, customers, and participants on personal social media sites.
* Staff should refrain from friending, following, or otherwise connecting with current DSB participants on personal social media. Staff should consider politely declining requests initiated by current participants.
* The posting or reposting of agency public announcements (such as job announcements, public events, or articles) on appropriate personal social media outlets is allowed.

# PROHIBITED USE

* Use of social media for personal purposes is not permitted on DSB equipment. Employees should only use DSB issued email accounts for official agency business.
* Social media shall not be used to transmit information or knowingly connect to sites for an unlawful or prohibited purpose, including, but not limited to the following examples:
  + Discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, color, gender, religion, age, marital status, national origin, sensory, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, or genetic information.
  + Transmission of obscene, defamatory, profane or otherwise offensive or inappropriate language or materials.
  + Personal attacks, threats, sexual harassment, or sites containing sexual content.
  + Transmission of privileged, protected, confidential or private information.
  + Transmission of proprietary information, copyright infringement, or any infringement on intellectual property.
  + Expression of any campaign, political, or religious beliefs in a work situation.
  + Conduct personal business, outside business or other financial benefit or gain on the state network.

Agency management has the authority to monitor employee use of the Internet to ensure use is consistent with this policy.

* Staff should not represent that they speak on behalf of the agency on a personal social media site, except as authorized by the Agency leadership or the Communications Office and in the course of official capacity as a DSB employee.
* Posting confidential or private information about the agency, other employees, or DSB participants on social media sites is unacceptable. The sharing of private or confidential information is subject to disciplinary action.
* Staff may not use the agency’s name and/or logo to promote personal causes, outside, non-agency employment, personal political beliefs, etc., on social media sites. An exception is the automatic loading of logos by the social media provider on certain professional networking sites.

# PRIVACY ISSUES

Employees should have no expectation of privacy in the use of Internet resources. Employees using social media should never disclose private or protected information. Please refer to [WAC 67-25-550](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=67-25-550) for the official DSB rules relating to confidentiality.

Owners of social media sites often share user activity and demographic information with third parties. This information may be captured directly during user interactions or indirectly using tracking cookies. It is important to remember that all activity conducted on social media sites is open to unrestricted public observation and users should conduct themselves accordingly.

Where the agency posts information to a site or service offered or controlled by a third party, the employee posting the information and the employee authorizing the post should, to the extent possible, include or make reference to the privacy policies or privacy notice applicable to the site or service.

The Internet is an unsecured publicly accessible network. Links and embedded files on social networking sites may contain malicious software or redirect users to inappropriate sites. Owners of social media sites commonly monitor usage activity and those activities may be disclosed to any number of parties.

# PUBLIC RECORDS

A record is defined broadly to include electronic records, including e-mail and metadata. Any record that is prepared, owned, used, or maintained by the DSB potentially relates to the conduct of government and is potentially disclosable.

# CONSEQUENCES AND RESTRICTIONS

Failure to follow this policy for using social media or participation in inappropriate use of social media may result in the loss of access privileges and corrective or disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Primary roles and responsibilities for Social Media/Networking within the Department of Services for the Blind:

| Role | Responsibilities |
| --- | --- |
| Employee | Read, acknowledge with signature, and follow the policy for Social Media/Networking. |
| Supervisor/Manager | Ensure that the policy for Social Media/Networking is read and followed. |
| DES HR Consultant | Answer any concerns and provide direction to the small agencies if situations arise. |