


<b>PBP FORM 290</b>  <b>PITTSBURGH BUREAU OF POLICE</b> <i>"...accountability, integrity and respect."</i>		<b>SUBJECT:</b> <b>"RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS"</b>		<b>ORDER NUMBER:</b> <b>68-3</b>	
		<b>PLEAC STANDARD:</b> <b>NONE</b>		<b>PAGE 1 OF 3</b>	
<b>ISSUE DATE:</b> <b>6/1/2012</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> <b>6/1/2012</b>	<b>ANNUAL REVIEW DATE:</b> <b>MAY</b>	<b>RESCINDS:</b> <b>N/A</b>	<b>AMENDS:</b> <b>N/A</b>	

## **1.0 POLICY**

- 1.1 It is the policy of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police that all personnel use computers, computer applications, computer programs, Internet resources, and network/Internet communications in a lawful manner and in conformance with the City's Electronic Communications Policy.
- 1.2 The on and off-duty conduct of its members may reflect on the Bureau's reputation. This policy is intended to guide members as it relates to their use of the numerous social networking venues. This policy will supplement the City's Electronic Communications Policy.

*See also General Order 16-1 Standards of Conduct, section 3.4*  
*See also General Order 68-1 Electronic Communications*

## **2.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1 Social Networking - Sites which focus on building online communities of people who share interests and activities and/or exploring the interests and activities of others. Examples of social networking websites include: Facebook, MySpace, Friendster, Linked In, Twitter, and sites that allow users to post personal blogs or allow peer to peer information sharing. The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site does not limit the extent of the applications of this policy.

## **3.0 POLICY TRAINING**

- 3.1 All full-time officers, administrative staff, support personnel, student interns, and volunteer staff will become familiar with, and adhere to the provisions of this policy and receive training and notification pertaining to this policy by in-service training, roll call training, internal mail, email, and/or occasional network log-on reminders.

## **4.0 SELF-IDENTIFICATION**

- 4.1 Members may identify themselves as representatives of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police on social networking sites. However, if they do, their actions may be seen as reflective of this Bureau, and as such, they must conform to the general internet use policy (*see General Order #68-1 "Electronic Communications"*) and by any sections of *General Order 16-1 "Standards of Conduct"* that may apply.
- 4.2 Self-identification can include, but is not limited to, the acknowledgment in the user profile for work experience, job title, etc., pictures which identify by image or caption affiliation with the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, or by identifying oneself as a member of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police.
- 4.3 Any member who identifies his/her employment with the Bureau of Police, assumes the responsibility for representing the Bureau in a professional manner from that period forward while still employed by the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police.
- 4.4 In accordance with §103.05 of the City Code, members may not use the Bureau's logos or other identifying items related to their employment on a social networking site without first obtaining written permission from the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
  - 4.4.1 A form for making this request is available in the "Police Offer's Toolkit."

**5.0 CONFIDENTIAL AND LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

- 5.1 Members must take proper care not to purposefully or inadvertently disclose any information that is confidential or law enforcement sensitive.
- 5.1.1 The uploading or posting of any images or videos of crime scenes, potential evidence, suspects, offenders, victims, department training, activities, reports, policies/procedures, or work related assignments to social networking sites is strictly prohibited.
- 5.2 Consult the Bureau's policies for guidance about what constitutes "confidential" or "law enforcement sensitive" information (*See "General Order #16-1 §3.4"*).
- 5.3 Members will also honor the privacy rights of current members by seeking their permission before writing about or displaying incidents or events which might be considered to be a breach of privacy.
- 5.4 Any member who violates this policy regarding confidentiality shall be subject to disciplinary action.

**6.0 TERMS OF SERVICE (TOS)**

- 6.1 Social networking sites require that users, when they sign up, agree to abide by a terms of service (TOS) document.
- 6.2 Members are responsible for reading, knowing, and complying with the TOS of the sites they use.
- 6.2.1 Most TOS agreements prohibit users from giving false names or other false information.
- 6.2.2 Members should be familiar with and comply with TOS requirements regarding copyright, plagiarism, fair use, libel, and defamation.

**7.0 PRODUCTIVITY**

- 7.1 Pittsburgh Bureau of Police employees shall comply with the general Internet use policy (*General Order #68-1 "Electronic Communications"*) and recognize that all time and effort spent on their personal site shall be done on their personal time and shall not interfere with their job duties.

**8.0 INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITIES**

- 8.1 No members should conduct any activity related to ongoing investigations through their personally owned social networking accounts.
- 8.2 Members shall refer to Bureau policy on conducting self-assigned investigations (*General Order #16-1 §3.46*).

**9.0 GENERAL CONDUCT GUIDELINES**

- 9.1 Members should use common sense in all communications, particularly on a website or social networking site which is accessible to anyone.
- 9.2 Employees are prohibited from posting commentary, content, or images on a social networking site that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, or libelous.
- 9.3 Employees are prohibited from using a city e-mail address to register for or respond to social networking sites.
- 9.4 Employees shall agree to take down any posting that violates this policy and to provide to the Bureau evidence that offending information has been removed.

**10.0 PROSPECTIVE FORMAL ACTIONS**

- 10.1 A violation of this policy could potentially be grounds for discipline.

10.2 Recognize that you are personally responsible and may be legally liable for anything you write or present online.

10.3 Any violation of this policy which harms or damages the defense of any civil litigation lawsuit, in which the member is a named defendant, may result in the City of Pittsburgh declining to defend and/or indemnify the member in those proceedings and/or from any results or verdicts arising from the lawsuit(s).

Approved By:

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Nathan E. Harper  
Chief of Police

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Date