

YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

Title: Social Networking Next Annual Review Date: 06/11/2018	Type: A. Administrative Sub Type: 5. Information Services Number: A.5.9
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References: National Labor Relations Act §§ 7 and 8(a) (1); YS Policies with reference to confidentiality and applicable ACA Standards are listed on Attachment A.5.9 (a)	
STATUS: Approved	
Approved By: <i>Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary</i>	Date of Approval: 06/11/2014

I. AUTHORITY:

Deputy Secretary of Youth Services (YS) as contained in La. R.S. 36:405. Deviation from this policy must be approved by the Deputy Secretary.

II. PURPOSE:

To establish the Deputy Secretary's policy regarding the distribution/posting of official and/or proprietary information by employees on social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, LinkedIn, blogging, etc.

III. APPLICABILITY:

All Youth Services employees.

IV. DEFINITIONS:

Official Social Network - Any social network developed or utilized by YS to post statements on behalf of YS, for use with other correctional or law enforcement systems, or for use within the government of the State of Louisiana.

Official Use -Using social networks for official YS purposes under the direction of, and approval by, the Deputy Secretary/ designee. An official YS purpose also includes performing investigative or law enforcement functions.

Proprietary Information - Any information concerning the operations of YS, the managing of information within YS, confidential records concerning youth and/or employees including the information deemed confidential as outlined in YS Policies listed on Attachment A.5.9 (a).

Social Media – Any type of Internet-based media created through social interaction, in which individuals produce the content.

Social Networks - On-line internet activity, all of which is trackable and traceable, and usually permanent. On-line social networks include blogs, chat rooms, message boards, discussion groups, email, texting, etc. where an employee writes/posts comments, or is a member of professionally or personally, including but not limited to, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, or any such network now in existence or created in the future.

Unofficial Social Network - Any social networks accessed using State or personal computers, telephones, etc. without the direction of, and approval by, the Deputy Secretary/designee.

Unofficial Use - Using social networks for any purpose other than "Official Use" as defined above.

V. POLICY:

It is the Deputy Secretary's policy that the confidentiality and security of YS/OJJ operations be protected and safeguarded by restricting the use of proprietary information concerning YS on social networks. In addition, the Deputy Secretary must ensure that the use of communications maintains the integrity and reputation of YS/OJJ, while minimizing actual or potential legal risks, whether used inside or outside the workplace. Protecting the image of YS/OJJ is crucial to its success.

Therefore, the official use of any social network shall be directed and coordinated by the Deputy Secretary/ designee.

VI. PROCEDURES:

A. Use of Official Social Networks in an Official Capacity

1. Each employee is responsible for what they post to social networks. Each employee is personally responsible for any on-line activity conducted with a YS/OJJ email address, and/or which can be traced back to YS/OJJ's domain, and/or which uses YS/OJJ's assets. The YS/OJJ email address attached to any employee's name implies that the employee is acting on YS/OJJ's behalf. Any on-line social networking activity traceable to the YS/OJJ domain is public and employees shall be held fully responsible for all such activities.
2. **Transparency and Identification:** When participating in any on-line community, an employee shall disclose their identity and affiliation with YS/OJJ. When posting to a blog, an employee shall always use their name of record with YS/OJJ. Employees are prohibited from creating an alias or posting anything anonymously. (See limited exception in Section B. below.)

3. Each employee shall follow the rules contained in the Employee Manual and in YS Policy C.1.13. These rules also apply to employee behavior while on social networks and other on-line spaces.
4. Each employee shall follow the terms and conditions of use that have been established by each venue used for social networking activities when conducted in the employee's official capacity.
5. Each employee shall refrain from posting any information or conducting any on-line activity that may violate local, state or federal laws or regulations.
6. Each employee shall maintain a log of all postings or comments made on a social networking site, along with the authorization they received to participate in that on-line activity. The employee may be asked to produce the log at any time. The log, at a minimum, shall contain information as to the date/time, venue, and topic discussed.

B. Use of Social Networks for Official Law Enforcement Purposes

1. Certain trained employees are authorized for investigative purposes to use an alias on a social network. Authorization for such activity shall be given by the Deputy Secretary.
2. Employees with authorization to use social networks for official law enforcement purposes shall maintain a record of the authorization, the purpose of the investigation, alias (es) used, sites visited, and results obtained. This record shall be maintained in a confidential investigative file, shall remain confidential, and shall not be subject to a public records request.
3. The Director of Investigative Services (IS) shall coordinate and monitor this activity, including monthly reports of any such activity. All information issued to and from the Director of IS and other authorized employees regarding the use of social networks is confidential, and shall not be subject to a public records request.

C. Unofficial Use of Social Networks

1. This section applies to an employee's personal use of social networks **whether on duty or off duty and whether or not the employee is using personal or YS/OJJ equipment.** When YS/OJJ equipment is used, all expectations of privacy are waived and consent to search the particular equipment is implicit.

2. An important component of the YS/OJJ mission is to promote public safety and protect youth, employees, and others from harm. Therefore, for security purposes, confidential and proprietary information, as defined herein, shall not be disclosed without the express permission from the Deputy Secretary/designee.
3. Employees shall not use their YS/OJJ e-mail address to register for social media sites, and are prohibited from posting a replica of YS/OJJ badges, seals and any other departmental identifiers, including uniforms or uniform components, identity or commission cards, as doing so would appear that the employee is acting on behalf of YS/OJJ.
4. All employees are strongly encouraged to be professional in their unofficial use of social networks. Social networks are public. Information posted on the internet remains indefinitely and may affect the employee's personal integrity and credibility. Postings that reflect negatively on the agency or on an employee's credibility or integrity will subject the posting employee to disciplinary action, up to and including, termination.
5. Employees are prohibited from discussing any YS/OJJ event or occurrence, standard or unusual, occurring on or off YS/OJJ property, or as a part of official action taken by YS/OJJ and/or its employees when the employee is engaged in unofficial use of social networks. Examples of prohibited postings include, but are not limited to, warrant and/or arrest operations, security operations, confidential information, personnel matters, etc.
6. Employees are prohibited from engaging in communication or contact with current or former youth and their families on social media networks pursuant to the guidelines established in YS Policy No. A.2.62.
7. Employees are strongly discouraged from posting any identifying information about themselves that they would not like the general public, including youth and youth family members, to possess. Examples of identifying information are social security number, home address, and phone numbers. Employees should recognize and understand that postings to a social network remain in the public domain **forever**. There is no such thing as successfully deleting comments or content once posted to an internet social network, web site blog, or any other social network medium, such as Twitter or Facebook.

8. Employees are prohibited from posting any pictures, photographs or schematics of any facility or office, including any employee's personal pictures taken at any facility or office.
9. Each employee shall follow the rules contained in YS Policies A.2.1 and C.1.13, as these rules apply to employee activity within social networking and other on-line spaces.
10. Cyber harassment of an employee, youth, or the public, including the use of social networks, internet or text messages, is prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Any such activity shall be treated as a violation of YS Policy A.2.8 and/or C.2.11, as warranted.
11. Employees shall not post comments or pictures that can negatively affect YS/OJJ's image and/or reputation. This prohibition includes racist or discriminatory remarks, and defamatory or derogatory comments regarding YS/OJJ.
12. All federal, state, and local laws shall be obeyed.
13. Excessive usage of personal computers, cellular phones, or other electronic devices while on duty may subject an employee to disciplinary action.

D. Disciplinary Action

1. An employee may be disciplined up to, and including termination, for violating the provisions of this policy.
2. No employee shall be disciplined for engaging in conduct permitted by the National Labor Relations Act §§ 7 and 8(a) (1) or in political speech.

VII. STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

1. YS/OJJ shall provide comprehensive pre-service and annual in-service training for all personnel regarding this policy.
2. All training shall be documented in the Training Records Entry Completed (TREC) database.

Previous Regulation/Policy Number: A.5.9

Previous Effective Date: 09/10/2012

Attachments/References:

