

Department Use of Social Media

325.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that any use of social media on behalf of the Department is consistent with the department mission.

This policy does not address all aspects of social media use. Specifically, it does not address:

- Personal use of social media by department members (see the Speech, Expression and Social Networking Policy).
- Use of social media in personnel processes (see the Recruitment and Selection Policy).
- Use of social media as part of a criminal investigation, other than disseminating information to the public on behalf of this department (see the Investigation and Prosecution Policy).

325.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Social media - Any of a wide array of Internet-based tools and platforms that allow for the sharing of information, such as the department website or social networking services.

325.2 POLICY

The Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety will use social media as a method of effectively informing the public about department services, issues, investigations, recruitment and other relevant events.

Department members shall ensure that the use or access of social media is done in a manner that protects the constitutional rights of all people.

325.3 AUTHORIZED USERS

Only social media sites authorized by the Chief of Public Safety shall be created/used to communicate with the public. No individual, group or Divisional shall create a social media account on behalf of the department or portraying anything that purports to represent the department's interest without authorization from the Chief.

Only members authorized by the Chief of Public Safety or the authorized designee may utilize social media on behalf of the Department. Authorized members shall use only department-approved equipment during the normal course of duties to post and monitor department-related social media, unless they are specifically authorized to do otherwise by their supervisors.

The Chief of Public Safety may develop specific guidelines identifying the type of content that may be posted. Any content that does not strictly conform to the guidelines should be approved by a supervisor prior to posting.

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

Department Use of Social Media

Requests to post information over department social media by members who are not authorized to post should be made through the member's chain of command.

325.3.1 SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Members of the social media team are authorized by the Chief of Public Safety to maintain and update the social media platforms listed in this policy. Members of the social media team are selected at the sole discretion of the Chief of Public Safety. Available team openings and current divisional assignments may be taken into consideration for selection onto the team. Any member of KDPS expressing interest in being a member of the social media team shall forward a memo through their chain of command to the Chief's Office for consideration.

The social media team should ideally consist of members in different divisions and those having different responsibilities within Public Safety. While the number of members on the team can vary, the team shall never consist of more than (10) members in order to sustain a consistent message and maintain span of control. Ideally, the team should consist of representatives from each the following divisions:

- a. (1) Representative from the Criminal Investigations Division (CID)
- b. (1) Representative from the Community Outreach and Planning Division (COPS)
- c. (1) Representative from a KDPS specialty unit (i.e. K9, SWAT, Bomb)
- d. (2) Representatives from the Operations Division (OPS)
 - a. Representatives from differing shifts preferable
- e. (1) Representative from the Recruitment Team
- f. (1) Representative from the Administration Division
 - a. Representative will serve as the overall team leader
- g. (1) Representative from Information Technology (support member)

If a member moves assignments/divisions within the department, the Chief of Public Safety should replace the team member with a representative from the member's previously assigned division whenever possible. The social media team will be re-evaluated every (6) months to ensure that the team is in compliance with departmental expectations.

325.4 AUTHORIZED CONTENT

Only content that is appropriate for public release that supports the department mission and that conforms to all department policies regarding the release of information may be posted. The following attachment will provide guidance regarding authorized content for the social media team. The attachment will also identify social media team member's roles and responsibilities.

[*Authorized Content Guide*](#)

Examples of appropriate content include:

- (a) Announcements.
- (b) Tips and information related to crime prevention.
- (c) Investigative requests for information.
- (d) Requests that ask the community to engage in projects that are relevant to the department mission.

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

Department Use of Social Media

- (e) Real-time safety information that is related to in-progress crimes, geographical warnings or disaster information.
- (f) Traffic information.
- (g) Media releases.
- (h) Recruitment of personnel.

325.4.1 INCIDENT-SPECIFIC USE

In instances of active incidents where speed, accuracy and frequent updates are paramount (e.g., crime alerts, public safety information, traffic issues), the Public Information Officer or the authorized designee will be responsible for the compilation of information to be released, subject to the approval of the Incident Commander.

325.5 PROHIBITED CONTENT

Content that is prohibited from posting includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Content that is abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory or sexually explicit.
- (b) Any information that violates individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and those provided under state, federal or local laws.
- (c) Any information that could compromise an ongoing investigation.
- (d) Any information that could tend to compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation or professionalism of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety or its members.
- (e) Any information that could compromise the safety and security of department operations, members of the Department, victims, suspects or the public.
- (f) Any content posted for personal use.
- (g) Any content that has not been properly authorized by this policy or a supervisor.

Any member who becomes aware of content on this department's social media site that he/she believes is unauthorized or inappropriate should promptly report such content to a supervisor. The supervisor will ensure its removal from public view and investigate the cause of the entry.

325.5.1 PUBLIC POSTING PROHIBITED

Department social media sites shall be designed and maintained to prevent posting of content by the public unless directly intended to illicit public response from the community as authorized by the Chief of Public Safety or designee.

The Department may provide a method for members of the public to contact department members directly.

325.6 MONITORING CONTENT

The Chief of Public Safety will appoint a supervisor to review, at least annually, the use of department social media and report back on, at a minimum, the resources being used, the effectiveness of the content, any unauthorized or inappropriate content and the resolution of any issues.

Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

Department Use of Social Media

325.7 RETENTION OF RECORDS

The Service Division Commander should work with the Custodian of Records to establish a method of ensuring that public records generated in the process of social media use are retained in accordance with established records retention schedules.

325.8 TRAINING

Authorized members should receive training that, at a minimum, addresses legal issues concerning the appropriate use of social media sites, as well as privacy, civil rights, dissemination and retention of information posted on department sites.