

A - 66 USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES

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POLICY

1. It is the policy of the Redding Police Department to comply with all existing laws and regulations regarding the use of social networking websites. When using social networking websites, personnel shall be governed by the ordinary and reasonable rules of good conduct and behavior and shall not commit any negligent, malicious or criminal act which may bring reproach or discredit upon the Police Department or the City of Redding. Department personnel shall at all times abide by the law enforcement code of ethics and all Department policies and procedures.
2. The Department has the responsibility to protect the rights of each employee regarding free speech and to understand that a balance must be maintained in order to protect mutual interests of both parties.

DEFINITIONS

3. **Social Networking Website:** An internet website which provides a virtual community for people interested in a particular subject or communicating with each other. Members can create their own online "profile" with biographical data, pictures, likes, dislikes and any other information they choose to post. They communicate with each other by voice, chat, instant message, video conference and blogs, and the service typically provides a way for members to contact "friends" of other members.

A "social networking website" is a "virtual community" where a group of people can use the Internet to communicate with each other about any topic. One can find dating sites, friendship sites, sites with a business purpose, and hybrids that offer a combination of these.

Current examples of Social Networking websites are: Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Second Life, World of Warcraft, etc.

4. **Electronic Communication:** Any kind of communications, created by, represented by, sent to, or stored by any user using any electronic communications system, including all information, data, and attachments to the communication.
5. **Blog:** Contraction of the term "weblog." It is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries

are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. "Blog" can also be used as a verb, meaning *to maintain or add content to a blog*.

6. Microblog: Another type of blogging, featuring very short posts, such as 140 characters or less (example: twitter.com) staying connected in real time. Followers of a microblog typically "subscribe" to the microblog of another and automatically receive newly posted information.
7. Virtual Worlds: A computer simulated world where users can socialize, connect, play games and create an alternate reality. Users can interact with other users in real time. Users can be represented as themselves or fictional characters. Virtual worlds typically have "currency" which is specific to the website which can be purchased with real world money or earned by accomplishments.
8. Pseudonym: A fictitious name, especially a pen name. This applies to "user names" or "user account identifications."
9. Personal Information: Any type of information which might lead to the identification of any individual. Examples may include social security numbers, dates of birth, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, driver's license or other state identification numbers.
10. Electronic Media: Digital photos, audio recordings, videos or digital information.
11. Post or Posting: Text or digital information placed on a website. Message(s) sent to a news group.
12. Confidential Information: Electronic media depicting the Redding Police Department, its employees, crime scenes, internal videos, daily work activity, or information sensitive to law enforcement, as well as electronic media or information which could be considered personal or private and could potentially expose the Police Department to liability.
13. Work Product: Any electronic media created or obtained by an employee while on-duty is considered and remains the property of the Redding Police Department. Examples may include, but are not limited to: photographs; videos; audio recordings; blog entries; depiction of the Redding Police Department, its image, and its employees; crime scenes; internal videos; daily work activity; information sensitive to law enforcement; electronic files or documents; and information created or obtained during the performance of an employee's duties. The work product of the Redding Police Department is public in nature and is subject to all Federal law, State law, City codes, and Department policy regarding its confidentiality and release.

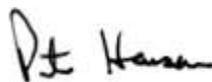
PROCEDURE

14. Redding Police Department Responsibilities:
 - A. It shall be the responsibility of the Department to set guidelines for the suggested appropriate use of social networking sites by Department employees.
 - B. The Department shall provide each employee with training and/or access to training materials related to Departmentally-approved use of social networking websites. Departmental training shall focus on the current trends for social networking for law enforcement employees, protecting employees' rights, and the Department's integrity.
 - C. The Department shall make efforts to review the participation of applicants in social networking websites prior to employment. The Department may review the participation of current employees on a case-by-case basis.
 - D. The Department has the responsibility to protect the work product of each employee, its trademarks, confidential information, evidence, and other intellectual properties such as patents, copyrights and trademarks which are protected by federal and state law.
 - E. Employees who are conducting criminal investigations which are part of their normal duty assignment are specifically authorized to use social networking websites to aid in their investigation. For example: Using pseudonyms for user name(s), locations, etc. to gain access to electronic communication(s) or information relevant to an investigation.

15. Employee Responsibilities:
 - A. It is the responsibility of each employee to know and follow the City of Redding's Personnel Manual governing the use of electronic communications and the Internet.
 - B. All electronic media created while on-duty is the property of the Redding Police Department and subject to all Federal and State law, City codes, and Department policy regarding its confidentiality and release. Dissemination outside of the Police Department is strictly prohibited without specific written authorization of the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
 - C. Employee conduct online, whether on- or off-duty, can have an impact on the Redding Police Department. When off-duty, employees shall not speak on behalf of the City unless approved by the Chief of

Police. Employee participation in social networking websites, virtual worlds, blogs, and/or micro-blogs should clearly state the communication is a personal viewpoint and is not that of the Redding Police Department when discussing City or Department-related issues.

- D. On-duty employees who wish to post comments in regard to any aspect of the Redding Police Department or any policy issue in which the Redding Police Department or City of Redding are involved must obtain prior authorization from the Chief of Police.
- E. Employees should be cognizant of posting any information about the Police Department, its employees, and/or work product. Any content of a video/photo shall not compromise the security of the agency by depicting information such as the layout of the Police facility(s), weapons storage areas, and communications equipment.
- F. Posting electronic media containing the Redding Police Department's uniform, patch or insignia(s), trademarks, symbols or work product, as well as the City of Redding insignia, is prohibited without prior authorization of the Chief of Police.
- G. Each employee has the responsibility to protect confidential or proprietary information by not posting such information on social networking websites.
- H. It shall be the responsibility of each employee to ensure that any comments, gestures, and/or postings made while participating in online communications, whether on- or off-duty, reflect the values of the Redding Police Department and do not project a negative image of the Redding Police Department or the law enforcement profession.
- I. These policies apply even if blogging, posting, or commenting is done anonymously or under a pseudonym. If engaging in such activities, an employee should be aware that in appropriate circumstances, the Redding Police Department reserves the right to take steps to determine an employee's identity.
- J. Any employee who becomes aware of a violation of this policy shall notify a supervisor or manager as soon as practical, or immediately if a criminal activity is suspected.



Peter T. Hansen
Chief of Police