

## **SECTION 5**

### **TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

#### **5.07 SOCIAL MEDIA**

**AUTHORITY:** CIVIL SERVICE ACT

**ADMINISTRATION:** P.E.I. PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS / AGENCIES

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Government of Prince Edward Island's expectations of employees to interact responsibly when using social media as a work duty, when using personal social media during work time, and when using personal social media during non-work time.

## 2. APPLICATION

These Guidelines apply to departments and agencies that are under the authority of the *Civil Service Act*.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**Approved Content:** Content that has been posted by a Designated User to Government of Prince Edward Island social media sites. Designated Users will ensure all content posted is consistent with an overall communications plan/strategy approved by the departmental Communications officers or Communications and Public Engagement division of Executive Council.

**Defamation:** A statement or communication tending to harm a person.

**Designated User:** An employee who has been designated with bona fide responsibility to access social media for work purposes per section 4.01 (c) of this Policy.

**Libel or Libelous:** A defamatory statement expressed in writing, a picture, a sign, or electronic broadcast.

**Posting:** The act of uploading, adding, contributing or linking content on a blog, social media site, or on the internet in general.

**Related to Government:** Information which relates to the Government of PEI, its Worksites, financially supported entities under the Financial Administration Act, and other levels of interaction (federal and municipal).

**Sharing:** The act of posting someone else's online content on your own social media site.

**Slander or Slanderous:** Is defamation in an oral or transitory form (e.g. speech or gesture).

**Social Media:** This is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technologies and social interaction online. Social media includes, but is not limited to, online social networks, video and photo file sharing, blogs, podcasting and other similar tools. Social media is used to produce, post, share, collaborate or network using text, photos, video, audio, tags, podcasts, real-time dialogue, blogs, wikis and other tools.

**Worksite:** Any location where an employee is performing work for, or on behalf of, the Government of Prince Edward Island. Worksite also includes training events, conferences, business travel, work related social gatherings, or other location(s) where an employee is actively engaged in activity associated with their employment.

**Work Time:** A time period when you are working for the Government of PEI (i.e. when not on a break)

## **4. POLICY**

### **4.01 General**

- a) All government employees who engage in social media, whether for work or for personal use,
  - i) must ensure they do not divulge private and/or confidential information related to the Government of Prince Edward Island, its clients, its affiliates, and/or its employees;
  - ii) must not violate any of the Government of Prince Edward Island's policies or any legislation including, but not limited to:
    - Oath of Office  
<http://iis.peigov/internalforms/oathofoffice/blankoathofoffice.html>
    - Conflict of Interest Guidelines  
[https://psc.gpei.ca/files/PDF%20Files/hrp-manual/hrppm\\_s5.03.pdf](https://psc.gpei.ca/files/PDF%20Files/hrp-manual/hrppm_s5.03.pdf)
    - *Civil Service Act* and Regulations  
<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/C-08-Civil%20Service%20Act.pdf>

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/legislation/civil-service-act/civil-service-act-regulations>

- Government Information Security Policy  
<https://iis.peigov/pubs/pdf/GISP%20June%202020.pdf>
- Policy for the Prevention and Resolution of Harassment in the Workplace  
<https://psc.gpei.ca/sites/psc.gpei.ca/files/11.01%20Policy%20for%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Resolution%20of%20Harassment%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf>
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*  
<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/justice-and-public-safety/freedom-information-and-protection-privacy-foipp>
- Information Security Guide for Employees  
<https://psc.gpei.ca/sites/psc.gpei.ca/files/InformationSecurityGuideforEmployees.pdf>
- Acceptable Use Agreement  
<http://iis.peigov/forms/pdf/Acceptable%20Use%20Agreement%20-%20Internal%20Users.pdf>
- French Language Services Act  
<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/F-15-2-French%20Language%20Services%20Act.pdf>
- Treasury Board Policy - Recorded Information Management  
<http://iis.peigov/dept/tboard/manual/pdf/sec501.pdf>

- b) Government of Prince Edward Island employees may be disciplined for conduct which violates this Policy, including, but not limited to, comments, or postings on social media, including non-work time use of social media, that:
- i) adversely affect the employee's job performance;
  - ii) affects the job performance of others with the Government of Prince Edward Island;
  - iii) negatively impacts the reputation of the Government of Prince Edward Island;

- iv) affects the Government of Prince Edward Island's legitimate business interests;
  - v) are inappropriate in nature (which may include those that are malicious, defamatory, libelous, slanderous, threatening, or discriminatory) or might constitute harassment;
  - vi) are threats of violence; or
  - vii) are inappropriate or unlawful.
- c) Communications and Public Engagement manages all government social media channels and has the authority to create new government social media channels or decommission government social media channels. Communications and Public Engagement will designate employees with bona fide responsibility to access social media for work as 'Designated Users'.
- d) Government employees who are not 'Designated Users' are prohibited from accessing social media during Work Time (see definition of Work Time).
- e) Government employees who are not 'Designated Users' must not disclose information, make commitments, or engage in activities on social media on behalf of the Government of PEI.
- f) No information related to the Government – including images, audio, or video taken of or within a Government of Prince Edward Island Worksite - can be posted to social media by an employee at any time (including non-work time) without the approval of the Government of Prince Edward Island.
- g) All government employees may share, and are encouraged to share, approved Government of Prince Edward Island content (see definition of Approved Content) on their personal social media sites on the basis that they do so in a manner that is not inconsistent with this Policy. Approved Government of Prince Edward Island Content includes web pages, news releases, and social media posts issued by – or on behalf of – the Government of Prince Edward Island.
- h) Personal opinions expressed by Government employees on social media during non-work time may violate this Policy, which includes the duty of loyalty owed by employees to the Government of Prince Edward Island not to undermine the public trust and confidence in the Government of

Prince Edward Island. Employee posts on social media that violate this Policy include posts that are:

- i) factually inaccurate;
  - ii) defamatory (including libelous or slanderous);
  - iii) damaging to the Government of Prince Edward Island, its policies, or reputation, or
  - iv) detrimental to the legitimate business interests of the Government of Prince Edward Island.
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- i) Government employees, who publicly identify as an employee of the Government of Prince Edward Island, must clearly indicate that posts on social media are of a personal or professional nature, and in either case are not made by or on behalf of the Government of Prince Edward Island.
  - j) Government of Prince Edward Island email addresses are not permitted for the use of Government employee's personal social media accounts.

#### **4.02 Responsibilities of the Employer**

- a) All managers/directors:
  - Know and understand this policy;
  - Comply with this policy and its related policies;
  - Offer guidance to any employees who have questions regarding the use of social media, and how to interpret or apply this policy;
  - Inform human resources of any violation of this policy;
  - In consultation with human resources, take necessary next steps including investigation and management; and,
  - Review the attached social media guidelines document (See Appendix A).
- b) Deputy Heads:
  - Know and understand this policy; and
  - Enforce this policy.
- c) Chief Executive Officer of the Public Service Commission:
  - Ensures this policy is reviewed every three years; and
  - Makes any necessary amendments.

#### **4.03 Responsibilities of the Employee**

- a) All employees are required to:
- Know and understand this policy;
  - Comply with this policy and its related policies;
  - Consult their manager if uncertain about how to interpret or apply this policy;
  - Notify his/her manager if:
    - they believe that they or any other employee may have posted private and/or confidential information related to the Government of Prince Edward Island, its clients, its affiliates, and/or its employees on social media; or
    - they believe that they or any other employee have posted inappropriate social media content as described in section 4.01(b);
  - Understand that they should not expect privacy when posting to social media sites;
  - Understand the Government of Prince Edward Island may investigate any reports of employee use of social media that violates this policy;
  - Understand that employees found in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination; and,
  - Review the attached social media guidelines document (See Appendix A).

#### **5. ATTACHMENTS**

APPENDIX A - Social Media Guidelines

## APPENDIX A

# Social Media Guidelines



DO

- **DO contribute to conversations.**  
We encourage people to like and share posts of the Government of PEI. If you want to share information about the Government, be sure it is factual and informed. If you choose to share your opinions, consider the duty of loyalty and make sure they are constructive and add to the conversation.
- **DO be up front about whom you are and what you do.** If you choose to share personal opinions, clearly identify that they are your own and do not represent the views of the Government of PEI. Also, remember the duty of loyalty. Only Designated Users are responsible to represent the Government of PEI on social media.
- **DO be professional,** whether posting for work purposes or privately, on your own time. Boundaries between personal, public and professional spaces are blurry. Always treat your colleagues with the same respect they are due in the workplace and maintain a professional image. Consider your professional standards and code of ethics at all times.
- **DO take your time.** Pause before you post to consider how your actions on social media may be perceived by the general public. Also, each new social media platform has its own quirks and conventions. Get to know how people relate in each and how what you post is visible to other users or visitors.
- **DO ensure work is your focus when you're on the job.** Whether or not you can access social media sites at your desk or on a smart phone/tablet, personal social media activity is only to be conducted on breaks or outside work hours.
- **DO speak with your supervisor/manager if you see something on line that may be of concern.**



DON'T

- **DON'T post items that could negatively reflect** on the Government of PEI's reputation or your own professional integrity, or that of others. Consider whether you would make the same comment in a public face to face meeting.
- **DON'T repeat, post or share** via social media anything you hear, see or learn about any client who accesses the Government of PEI services, inside or outside the Government of PEI worksites. You must not refer to clients online.
- **DON'T vent or air work-related complaints or issues** you have on social media or to refer publicly to concerns regarding your employer, supervisor, colleagues or clients.
- **DON'T rely on privacy controls to keep you out of trouble.** Take steps to limit who can see information or media you post, but consider that anything you post may remain online forever and be shared beyond your control.
- **DON'T compromise personal safety/IT security.** Do not post personal information that could make you a target for fraud, identify theft or abuse, or use the information of others in this way. Ensure you are always in compliance with the "Acceptable Computer Use Agreement" that you signed upon hiring.