

SAN BERNARDINO MUNICIPAL WATER DEPARTMENT

POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL

POLICY 62.070 - SOCIAL MEDIA

Date:	April 24, 2018
Revision No:	New
Supersedes:	New
First Adopted:	April 24, 2018

POLICY:

The Department recognizes that most people have personal social media sites and social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends, and coworkers around the world. However, the use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. This policy is intended to provide guidance with respect to the use of personal social media sites and the discussion of work related matters.

For purposes of this policy, social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content on any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the Department, as well as any other form of electronic communication. Examples include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Pinterest, Google Plus, etc. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects the employee's job performance, the performance of coworkers, or otherwise adversely affects customers, suppliers, others who work on behalf of the Department or the Department's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination should Department staff become aware of the posting(s). Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate conduct that violates Department policies or is unlawful will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Department employees must recognize that the content of messages posted on social media websites are public and may be erroneously cited as official Department statements. If a Department employee has a personal social media site and comments on work related matters, the employee must state his/her name and, if relevant, his/her position and use a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and do not reflect or represent the opinions of the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department for which I work."

PROCEDURE:

Personal Social Media Sites

- A. Department employees shall not use a Department email account or password in conjunction with a personal social media site. Nor shall a Department employee be compelled, as a condition of employment, to disclose a user name and password for personal social media sites. However, if the Department issues an electronic device and/or a social media email account, the Department is not precluded from requiring or requesting an employee to disclose a username, password, or other method of access for the purpose of accessing that device or account.
- B. Employees should always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, customers, suppliers, or others who work on behalf of the Department. Also, please keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work related complaints by speaking with your coworkers or supervisor(s) than by posting complaints on social media. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photos, video, or audio that could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage customers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could be considered discriminatory based a protected category such as race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or Department policies.
- C. Make sure postings are honest and accurate when posting information or news. If a mistake is made, correct it quickly and be honest about any previous posts that have been altered.

It is important to remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about the Department, coworkers, customers, suppliers, or others working on behalf of the Department.

- D. Department employees may not discuss Department litigation or personnel matters involving a specific employee.
- E. Department employees may not use a personal social media site to speak on behalf of the Department.
- F. Department employees may not operate or participate in any social media sites that use the name San Bernardino Municipal Water Department (SBMWD), or any variation thereof.
- G. Employees should refrain from using social media during work hours or on Department issued/owned equipment, unless it is work related.
- H. Employees should not speak to the media on the Department's behalf without approval. All media inquiries should be directed to the Water Conservation/Public Affairs Coordinator, Deputy General Manager, or General Manager.
- I. The Department prohibits retaliation against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Department Social Media Sites

Department employees who comment on the Department's social media sites in their personal capacity are bound by this social media policy. An employee using his/her personal social media site may post comments to a Department site according to the following rules:

- A. Employee must not use official Department social media sites to conduct private commercial transactions or to engage in private business activities.

- B. While a non-employee who abuses the Department social media sites may be subject only to having their comment taken down, Department employees who abuse the Department's social media sites are subject to disciplinary action.
- C. The Department reserves the right to revoke the privilege of participating in Department social media sites for any reason.
- D. Employees who post comments on a Department social media site should follow professional standards for good grammar, spelling, conciseness, clarity and accuracy, and should avoid jargon, obscure terminology, or acronyms.
- E. Employees may not create or alter content on any Department social media site. Such creation or alteration may be done only by authorized personnel with the approval of the Water Conservation/Public Affairs Coordinator, Deputy General Manager, or General Manager.

Record Retention

Department social media sites contain communications sent to or received by the Department and its employees. Such communications are, therefore, public records subject to the retention requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. These retention requirements apply regardless of the form of the record (for example, digital text, photos, audio, and video). The Department shall preserve records pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.

Policy Review

Board Approved:	<u>5/8/2018</u>
No Changes:	<u>7/2019</u>
No Changes:	<u>7/2020</u>
No Changes:	<u>7/2021</u>

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF MANDATORY COMPLIANCE WITH
CITY OF SAN BERNARDINO MUNICIPAL WATER DEPARTMENT POLICY ON
SOCIAL MEDIA**

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the City of San Bernardino Municipal Water Department Policy on Social Media (Policy No. 62.070). I have read the policy and understand that compliance with this policy is mandatory and violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

Date

Employee Signature

Employee Name (Print)