

Approved By:

- I. PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines regarding appropriate, responsible and safe use of social media by Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation employees. For the purposes of this policy, the term employees shall include classified employees, wage employees, consultants, contract employees and interns.
- II. POLICY STATEMENT:** The Department shall comply with the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Policy No. 1.75 Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media. Designated employees may be granted access to social media platforms to conduct agency business in accordance with the provisions of this policy and Director's Policy #100-12 Personal Use of State Equipment and Information Technology.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
- Social Media Forms of electronic communication (e.g., Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, messages, and other content.
- IV. RELATED DOCUMENTS:**
- [DHRM Policy No. 1.75 Use of Electronic Communications and Social Media](#)
  - [Director's Policy #100-12 Personal Use of State Equipment and Information Technology](#)
  - [Information Management Procedure #1001 Record Management](#)
  - [Director's Policy #100-04 Release of Information](#)
- V. GENERAL PROVISIONS:**
- A. AUTHORIZATION**
1. Only designated employees shall be authorized by the Director to access and use social media platforms to conduct agency business. The social media platforms shall be periodically monitored by designated employees during regular public service hours (Monday-Friday between 8:15 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., excluding state holidays and official closures).
  2. Employee use of social media during work hours shall conform to [Director's Policy #100-12 Personal Use of State Equipment and Information Technology](#).
- B. CONTENT**
1. Posts made or received in connection with the transaction of DPOR public business are classified as public records and must be retained in accordance with Library of Virginia record retention requirements (see [Information Management Procedure #1001 Record Management](#)). Copies of records already retained in some other manner are not subject to special retention considerations.
  2. Communications posted by designated employees to official DPOR social media platforms must be professional in nature and not reflect personal views or opinions.
  3. Employees shall always abide by state confidentiality guidelines (see [Director's Policy #100-04 Release of Information](#)) when using social media. If a person voluntarily posts confidential information on the Department's social media site, the information shall be removed with a private message sent explaining why and directing them to a secure venue for contacting the agency.

4. Postings, comments and any other content that contain profanity, spam, vulgarity, defamation, political campaigns or services, off-topic comments, long embedded URLs, personal attacks, threats, unsupported accusations, or confidential information is prohibited and shall be removed immediately.

#### C. DISCLAIMER

1. Nothing in this policy is intended to govern or prevent any DPOR employee from posting on his or her own personal social media platforms (e.g., personal blog, wiki, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter) or social media platforms controlled by others where the content is not related to DPOR or the employee's job.
2. Personal use of social media that refers to any aspect of the work environment should be done in a responsible and professional manner. In the event social media content does relate to an employee's job or to DPOR, directly or indirectly, the employee using social media platforms for personal use should make clear they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the Department or the Commonwealth. Any personal electronic transmission that may be reasonably interpreted as an official Department transmission shall include a disclaimer indicating that the communication is personal and not an official communication of the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation or the Commonwealth of Virginia.

#### D. NO RIGHT TO PRIVACY

1. Information posted to the Department's social media site is subject to public disclosure under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.
2. A copy of the state and Department policies regarding employee use of social media, state equipment and information technology shall be provided to all new employees during their orientation. Each user shall be required to acknowledge receipt of the policies and their responsibility to abide by them.