

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICY DIRECTIVE	EFFECTIVE DATE 08/17/2020	NUMBER 01.04.106
	SUBJECT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	
SUPERSEDES NEW		AUTHORITY MCL 791.203, MCL 791.206
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POLICY STATEMENT:

Guidelines for use of social media by Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) employees shall be established as set forth in this policy directive.

RELATED POLICIES:

- 01.06.130 Media Relations
- 02.03.106 External Communications by Employees

POLICY:

DEFINITIONS:

- A. Official MDOC Accounts – Social media accounts approved by the Public Information Office.
- B. Post – Any user-generated information shared on a social media platform.
- C. Social Media – Forms of electronic communication (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, YouTube) by which users share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- D. Employees are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree that their posts do not impair working relationships, impede the performance of duties, or negatively affect the public perception of the Department. In order to prevent harming the Department’s reputation or negatively affecting the efficiency of the Department, employees must use appropriate discretion in the use of references to the Michigan Department of Corrections so as not to discredit the Department or its employees and ensure that information concerning official business is not released, either directly or indirectly, by an employee.
- E. Posts that contain information obtained through the employee’s professional duties and responsibilities may not be protected under the First Amendment and may form the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the Department. Employees are prohibited from posting negative, inappropriate, or confidential information about an offender even if the offender’s name or identifying information is not provided, on personal social media accounts.
- F. Employees shall not represent personal social media accounts as Official MDOC Accounts. Employees may use their personal social media accounts for work purposes.
- G. Employees are personally responsible for information they communicate on social media. Any communication about correctional issues shall follow the guidelines of PD 01.06.130 “Media Relations,” PD 02.03.106 “External Communications by Employees,” and this policy directive. An employee who posts on social media about correctional issues that are inconsistent with the Department’s position shall state that their remarks are not made in their official capacity as an employee of the MDOC. Adding a disclaimer does not make an employee immune from discipline.
- H. Employees have a duty to report any known violations of this policy.
- I. Only Official MDOC Accounts may use the MDOC seal as a social media profile picture or cover/banner image.

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OPERATING PROCEDURES

J. Operating procedures are not required for this policy.

AUDIT ELEMENTS

K. Audit elements are not required for this policy.

APPROVED: HEW 08/10/2020