

ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE #CO-09

SUBJECT: SOCIAL MEDIA USE

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 7, 2010

REVIEW DATE: April 7, 2011

SUPERSEDES: NEW

Purpose:

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online. County departments may consider participating in social media formats to reach a broader audience. Hillsborough County encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the County and the missions of its departments where appropriate.

Policy:

In accordance with Human Resources Policy 6.22, the Office of the County Administrator (OCA) is committed to providing public information in convenient, meaningful ways with county residents. Engaging in helpful dialogue with residents through social media as a County employee is acceptable when performed in adherence with the employee's regular scope of work and responsibilities during work time.

Responsibilities:

As with other forms of public communication, such as telephone and email, employees who engage in using social media during work hours are personally responsible for the content they publish.

The creation of County social media platforms must be approved by the County Administrator.

Guidelines:

1. Employees must not engage in visiting or contributing to social media sites during work hours, unless their position is designated to do so by their department Director, and approved by the County Administrator or his or her designee, the Communications Director.
2. Engagement on any social media platform on work time should be performed in adherence with the employee's direct scope of work and

responsibilities, with the best interest of the County paramount in their postings.

3. Employees must identify themselves by name and department and write in the first person when discussing County matters, and conduct themselves in a professional and positive tone.
4. Departments that use social media are responsible for complying with applicable federal, state and county laws, regulations and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and other protected information such as Personal Identifiable Information (PII). Confidential information such as HIPAA protected content must remain confidential.
5. A public blog is not the place to communicate internal county policies for employees or to air disputes or grievances.
6. These guidelines may continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge. The Communications Director will review social media site usage and provide policy recommendations to the County Administrator on a continuing basis.

Unacceptable uses: Accessing, messaging or printing sensitive materials including, but not limited to, illegal activities, gambling, sexually explicit materials, weapons, drugs, violence or materials that include inappropriate language, profanity, obscenity, racial, ethnic or discriminatory comments, defamatory statements or otherwise inappropriate content (to include statements such as partisan political positions, religious positions and other statements that may subject the County, its mission, or its employees to be viewed in a light that is not in the best interest of Hillsborough County) is strictly prohibited. (HR 6.22)

Failure to Comply: Each department is responsible for ensuring compliance with this directive and HR 6.22. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in the removal of department pages or information from social media outlets. Employees may lose the privilege to use their electronic devices and/or telecommunication equipment and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Approved By: /s/ _____ 4/7/10
County Administrator Date