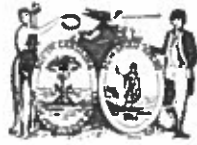


**The State of South Carolina  
Military Department**



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NGSC-TAG

15 February 2019

MEMORANDUM FOR All members of the South Carolina Military Department (SCMD)

SUBJECT: Policy for Social Media and Online Conduct

1. Social media provides a valuable platform to share information. It is a popular means of communication, authorized and encouraged for use by the Office of the Adjutant General. As social media platforms augment and replace traditional means for communication, it is important for all leaders to ensure missions are not adversely affected as a result of social media.
2. Operational security (OPSEC) is crucial to maintain while using social media. Information that may compromise OPSEC must not be disclosed via any public forum, including 'closed groups,' open source publications, or the media. Do not disseminate or publish photographs or videos displaying critical or sensitive information to include exact number of troops, exact location or dates of a mission, and any specific details of the mission. If you see OPSEC compromised, do not publicly reference, further disseminate, or republish the critical information. Report the violation to your chain of command and ask the person to remove the information, if feasible. SCMD employees must be mindful of threats, as well as appropriate conduct when given access to sensitive information or missions. Posting of images, video, or content to personal social media platforms is prohibited when it violates OPSEC, the privacy of others, or does not represent the values of the organization. SCMD employees are reminded to implement security measures while using social media platforms and devices in order to restrict outsider access, such as geo-tagging and increasing privacy settings.
3. Unless explicitly stated otherwise by your supervisor, personal social media usage during duty hours should be limited to authorized breaks unless social media engagement is a specific function of your position duties. Personal social media usage is prohibited on SCMD equipment. Social media applications should not be installed on SCMD mobile devices without prior approval.

4. Participating in social media is a personal decision. Be cognizant of how you represent yourself within your personal social networks because you are representing the SCMD as a member of the organization. Your personal views can be seen as the views of the SCMD, even if you disclose a post as your own opinion. For this reason, be mindful of information posted to social media platforms that would reflect poorly on the organization. This includes, but is not limited to, personal opinions on leadership or leadership decisions, decisions and announcements made by the U.S. President, political views, and any controversial media topic or event. Information posted to personal profiles still resides in the public domain and becomes the intellectual property of the platform owner, to be used at their will. While the members of the SCMD retain their First Amendment rights while using an online platform, members of the South Carolina Air and Army National Guard and state employees who use personal social media platforms are still expected to abide by applicable laws and regulations and maintain a professional demeanor.

5. SCMD employees must not engage in offensive and inappropriate behavior on social media that could bring discredit upon themselves and the organization or could imply prejudice, racism, sexual harassment, sexism, or be seen as defamatory, libelous, obscene, abusive, threatening, or otherwise offensive or illegal.

6. Social media users must also be mindful of implying federal endorsement of an organization, political party, business, or service. The Joint Ethics Regulation states, "Endorsement of a non-Federal entity, event, product, service, or enterprise may be neither stated nor implied by DoD or DoD employees in their official capacities. DoD personnel must protect against use of titles, positions, organization names to suggest official endorsement or preferential treatment of any non-Federal entities."

7. Any SCMD employees serving as an authorized official to speak on behalf of the organization providing statements in a public forum should identify themselves and their affiliation with the SCMD. If the individual is expressing personal opinion and is not authorized to speak on behalf of the SCMD, they must make it clear the statements are their own and do not represent an official SCMD position. Such a disclaimer may read, "This statement is my own and does not constitute an endorsement by or the view of the South Carolina Military Department, its sections or Divisions, or the U.S. Department of Defense." If you find a SCMD employee creating, sharing, or making statements via a social media platform that violates the above mentioned, report these posts to the South Carolina National Guard Public Affairs office by using [nq.sc.scarnq.list.paosc@mail.mil](mailto:nq.sc.scarnq.list.paosc@mail.mil), so that the violation may be addressed.

8. Only Public Affairs officers, Public Information officers, and other specifically designated individuals are authorized to create or maintain official organizational websites and social media pages. Individual members who establish online sites or


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groups relating to SCMD, or any Division thereof, that are not official must clearly state the site or group is not official and may not use official government symbols, such as unit insignia or patches, official seals, logos, etc., which are likely to be understood as implying government endorsement or participation. Such social media pages when discovered or reported will be considered to be impersonating an official government agency and will be immediately reported to the social media platform provider where the page resides, regardless of who created the page that is improperly utilizing official content. Members are strongly advised to notify the Public Affairs Office if they create an online presence or social media page, so they may be reviewed for compliance with Department of Defense policies.

9. Violations of paragraphs two, three, five, six, and eight of this policy are punitive. SCMD employees who fail to comply with this policy, or fail to comply with supervisory directives concerning appropriate social media usage, may be subject to the Agency's Progressive Discipline Policy, up to and including termination, or face prosecution under the South Carolina Code of Military Justice at the discretion of the individual's chain of command.

10. For questions or concerns regarding this policy or the appropriate use of social media platforms, contact the state Public Affairs Office at 803-299-4327 or [ng.sc.scarnq.list.paosc@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sc.scarnq.list.paosc@mail.mil).

  
R. VAN MCCARTY  
Major General, SCARNG  
The Adjutant General

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