TN Department of Human Resources

POLICY

Approved by: Rebecca R. Hunter, Commissioner	**Policy Number:** 12-058 (Rev. 2/15)
Signature: Rebecca R Hunter	**Supersedes:** 12-058
Application: Executive Branch Agencies and Employees, Human Resources Officers	**Effective Date:** February 1, 2015
Authority: T.C.A § 8-30-104	**Rule:** N/A

Subject:

Personal Use of Social Media

Social media is a term that encompasses the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. It includes, but is not limited to, social networking, the use of websites that allow users to share content, interact, and develop communities around similar interests.

This policy is intended to provide guidelines to ensure that social media tools are used properly, and to address potential risks. The suggestions provided in these guidelines are designed to protect State employees and ensure consistency across agencies. Every State employee is responsible for reviewing and complying with the following policy at work and outside of work.

The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in online social networks, and whatever you post on your personal account will likely reflect on the state. Therefore, be aware of your association with the State and thoughtful of how you present yourself online. A personal social media account, while an appropriate place to share personal opinions, is not a place to present an individual opinion as an official agency view. Be mindful that despite all privacy controls, whatever you publish can be seen by many different people, including your supervisors, co-workers, and customers.

- Personal use of social media must be consistent with the terms of use outlined in the Employee Acceptable Use Policy. State employees cannot use personal social media sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities during business hours and with State-issued property. State employees are also prohibited from using social media to violate any other applicable state, federal, or local laws, policies, and regulations.

- Employees' personal use should not be attributable to an agency or department of the State of Tennessee or the employee's job function at an agency or department. An employee's use and comments made at social media sites are subject to First Amendment protections. However, any personal use must be conducted in such a manner that a reader would not think that the employee is speaking for or on behalf of his/her agency employer. If you list the State of Tennessee as your employer on your personal social media profiles, any information you post will be held to a higher level of scrutiny.

- Personal use of social media must be in conformance with relevant portions of agency and state workplace policies, laws, and regulations, including but not limited to, harassment and discrimination policies, confidentiality policies, ethics rules, code of conduct, workplace violence, etc.
- You shall not give employment references online. Such references must be handled by your agency's human resources division.
- Any information that is considered confidential shall not be released on any social media account.
- You shall not use the State of Tennessee logo or any agency logo on any personal postings.
- Your social media accounts may be subject to monitoring without notice or consent if these sites are accessed on State property.
- Violation of any of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the agency human resources office or Office of General Counsel.

Attachment – Employee Acknowledgement Form

Social Media Policy

Employee Acknowledgement

I, _____, hereby certify that I have received a copy of the Social Media Policy. I realize that a violation of this policy can subject me to discipline, up to and including termination.

_____ _____
Employee Signature Date

_____ _____
Human Resources Office Signature Date