

L&I Employee Policies and Procedures

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Social Networking - DRAFT

General Topic: Information Technology

Policy #: 7.40

Subject: Social Networking

Issued: August 31, 2009 (no previous policy)

Contact: Assistant Director, Communications

See also: Employee Policies [2.06](#); [2.08](#); [2.10](#); [3.00](#); [3.10](#); [3.13](#); [3.32](#), [3.33](#); [3.39](#); [7.20](#); [7.30](#)

Purpose and Description

This policy establishes the Department's position regarding the proper business use of social networking computer technology by employees, contractors, or any other persons using state technology. Social networking is used by the agency primarily as a communication tool.

Definition

For purposes of this policy, *social networking* is defined as interaction with external web sites or service based on participant contributions to the content. Examples include, but are not limited to, YouTube; flickr; MySpace; twitter.

Policy

A. Creating any social networking site or representing the Department in any social media capacity must be approved by the Deputy Director of Operations and the Assistant Director for Communications.

B. Social networking will be used only for business purposes.

1. When using social networking sites, employees will conduct state business in a manner that is consistent with public service and trust, and contributes to the overall business integrity and organizational effectiveness of L&I (see agency ethics policy, [EP 3.00](#)) .
2. Any employee who observes or has knowledge of prohibited use of social networking technology should report it to a supervisor, the Office of Human Resources, or another appropriate supervisor/manager within L&I. Employees reporting such actions will be protected from retaliation.

C. Social networking is subject to the agency policies including, but not limited to:

1. *Sexual Harassment* (see [EP 3.13](#)). The agency prohibits sexual harassment at any location that can reasonably be considered an extension of the workplace such as a customer location, an off-site business function, a social networking site, or any place where agency business is being conducted or discussed.

2. *Discrimination* (see [EP 3.10](#)). The agency prohibits any form of unlawful discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or veteran status.
3. *Private Use of State Resources* (see [EP 2.08](#)). Employees are prohibited from using agency time or equipment for personal or political purposes on any social networking site (see [EP 3.33](#)).
4. *Public Records Act and Public Retention Policy* (see [EP 2.10](#)). Audit trails or any available reports used to log employee use of social networking sites remain the property of the Department, and may be accessed or reviewed to monitor compliance with this policy, conduct investigations, or for other operational purposes.
5. *Compliance with Copyright Laws* (see [EP 3.39](#)). L&I staff are expected to understand and follow the laws pertaining to the use and duplication of copyright-protected materials when conducting state business on social networking sites.
6. *Teleworking or Alternative Worksites* (see [EP 3.07](#)). L&I staff must comply with agency standards for social networking when teleworking or working at an alternate worksite.
7. While on social networking sites, employees must follow Information Technology security policies and standards (see [EP 7.20](#)).
8. Sharing confidential or restricted confidential information on a social networking site is prohibited (see [EP 2.06](#)).

D. Improper or unlawful use of L&I technology resources is prohibited because of the potential risks to the Department and the individual employee.

1. These risks include, but are not limited to:
 - loss of public trust in L&I/State services;
 - service and performance interference;
 - financial loss;
 - unlawful activity;
 - loss of network or operational integrity; and
 - charges or other legal consequences related to sexual harassment, discrimination, or improper access to or dissemination of information
2. Most technology usage is recorded and therefore available for review by both internal and external sources. All employees must be aware that reproducible records, are *not* private, and may be subject to disclosure under public disclosure laws (see [EP 2.08](#)).

E. The violation of this policy is regarded by L&I as a serious offense and is subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as appropriate.

F. Employees' use of social media sites for gathering information for business purposes must be approved by their manager or supervisor (see [EP 3.32](#)).

Exceptions to this policy may be made in order to comply with federal and state law requiring reasonable accommodation of individuals with disabilities./font>

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