



Ithaca Police Department

120 East Clinton Street
Ithaca, New York 14850

General Order Number:380

Title: Computer, Communication, Social Media and Internet-
Acceptable Use Policy

Issuing Authority: Chief John Barber

Effective Date: 10/01/2016

Rescinds/Supersedes: GO 380 Issued 12/01/15

Review Date: 12/2017

Applicable NYSLEA Standards: 14.1

Number of Pages: 4

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy to provide officers with guidance on the proper use of the City's computer systems and devices as well as the use of social media sites on behalf of the City of Ithaca.

II. Policy

All officers are required to comply with these guidelines when using City equipment and services, software packages, internal and external databases, information exchange networks, e-Justice, and where applicable, internet e-mail, intranet e-mail, social media, voice mail, mobile computer terminal usage to include e-Justice, Spillman messaging switching and related electronic communication devices.

III. Definitions

- A. **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE (ECD):** For purposes of this policy, electronic communication devices include computers, electronic mail systems, and voice mail systems, cell phones, paging systems, electronic bulletin boards, internet services, mobile computer terminals and facsimile transmissions.
- B. **SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR:** For purposes of this policy, the Systems Administrator is designated with responsibility for managing all aspects of electronic communication through all City ECD.

IV. Procedures

- A. Transmission of electronic messages and information on ECD provided for officers shall be treated with the same degree of propriety, professionalism, and confidentiality as official written correspondence.
- B. Use of the City's equipment and services is for City purposes only. Installation of or access to software for entertainment, commercial or any other purpose is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to use of City equipment, software and/ or services for social media or social communications for personal use, such as Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram and Face Time. Additional information on the use of social media sites is found in Article V of this directive.
- C. Officers have no expectation of privacy and their activity may be monitored while utilizing City ECD equipment, services or software.
- D. The City reserves the right to access information contained in and officer's ECD and may require members to provide passwords to systems or files that have been encrypted or password protected.
- E. The City reserves the right to access, for quality control purposes and/or to determine whether there are violations of this policy, all ECD used by an officer conducting business for the City.
- F. Any materials received from outside of the City shall be subject to the City's protocol for scanning for viruses.
- G. Members shall observe copyright restrictions of any documents, images, or sounds sent through or stored on electronic mail.
- H. Accessing or transmitting materials (other than that required for official City business) that involve the use of obscene language, images, jokes, sexually explicit materials, or messages that disparage any person, group, or classification of individuals is prohibited whether or not a recipient has consented to or requested such material.
- I. Confidential, proprietary or sensitive information may be disseminated (or made available through shared directories or networked systems) only to individuals with a need and a right to know and when there is sufficient assurance that appropriate security of such information will be maintained. Such information includes but is not limited to the following:
 - 1. Criminal history information and confidential informant master files, identification files or related information.
 - 2. Intelligence files and information containing sensitive tactical and undercover information.

- J. No officer shall access or allow others to access any file or database unless that person has a need and a right to such information. In the event, the officer is unsure whether the individual has authorized access; the individual will be referred to the Chief of Police. Additionally, personal identification and access codes shall not be revealed to any unauthorized source.
- K. Officers may use City equipment for infrequent personal use with the recognition that there is no expectation of privacy of any communication made with City equipment or services and that those communications may be monitored.
- L. Officers shall not allow non-City personnel use of any City ECD.
- M. To avoid breach in security, members shall log off any personal computer that has access to the agency's computer network, electronic mail systems, the Internet, or sensitive information whenever they leave their workstation.
- N. With prior approval from the Chief of Police, officers may use City equipment when off-duty for professional and career development purposes.

V. Social Media Use.

- A. The integrity of the police department and the City depends, in part, on community, and public relations. With the increase in use of social media, the way in which we communicate continues to evolve, creating more avenues of communication.
- B. There are many social media networks, such as Facebook, Flickr, LinkedIn, Myspace, Twitter, etc. All of which can lead to concerns relating to individual privacy, breach of confidentiality and inappropriate workplace conduct.
- C. For purposes of this policy, the terms “social networking” and “social media” are intended to encompass any and all currently existing or newly created social networking websites, whether information is disseminated through e-mail, texts, blogs, tweets, or similar communications. For purposes of this policy, all such communications will be referred to as a “post” or “posting.”
- D. This policy applies to social networking on behalf of the City.
- E. Posting on behalf of the police department or the City.
 - 1. Employees are strictly prohibited from representing in any posting or communication that they are acting as a representative of the City of Ithaca Police Department unless officially designated to do so, in writing, by the Chief of Police.
 - 2. Departmental or City symbols, logos, or trade information may only be used with the prior written authorization of the Chief of Police.

3. All postings on behalf of the police department must be reviewed by the Chief of Police or his designee.