

	Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems		
	<i>Policy: Social Media Use Policy</i>		
	<i>Originator: Public Information & Educational Support</i>		
	Policy Number	Effective Date	Revision Date
	400.01	August 15, 2012	n/a

Purpose: This document formalizes the policy for Trustees who manage any social media site as an official representative of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) (i.e., agency use). All Trustees must follow this policy and any additional applicable policy that may be adopted by MIEMSS or the State of Maryland. Failure to observe this policy could result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. This policy does not apply to personal, i.e. not job-related, use of social media sites. MIEMSS employees engaging in social media in an individual (non-official) capacity should communicate clearly that they are not acting in a representative capacity, or expressing the views of MIEMSS, when they identify themselves as MIEMSS employees online.

1. Definitions

- a. Agency use means an employee’s use of social media is for the express purpose of communicating MIEMSS’s specific mission, programmatic interests, and policy interests.
- b. Creative Commons Attribution License is a copyright license that permits the distribution of copyrighted works under certain provisions.
- c. Cyber attack refers to any malicious action by an individual or group that is intended to cause harm to unsuspecting internet users
- d. Domain name is the identifying name of an internet site (e.g., www.miemss.org)
- e. Fans, Friends, and Followers: Generally speaking, “Fans” is a term used to identify people that click the “like” button Facebook to follow a business or organization. “Friends” is a term used to describe two or more people that “like” each other on Facebook. For an agency like MIEMSS, we would tend to only have fans, not friends. “Followers” are those individuals that want to receive Twitter updates created by another Twitter user.
- f. A Hyperlink is a reference that allows navigation to another web page or site, usually by a single mouse click
- g. FTP stand for File Transfer Protocol and refers to a website through which users can exchange files by uploading and downloading them.
- h. Malware is short for malicious software that is created to disrupt, corrupt, or access other users’ personal information or computers.
- i. Social media site is a broad term referring to user-driven content technologies, including but not limited to internet sites, applications, and tools.
- j. The Social Media Manager is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

- k. Third-party refers to any website, external application, embedded application, or tool that was not created and is not managed by the principal site from which the user can access it.
- l. A Trustee is any individual employee or contract employee that has been given permission to engage with social media as an official representative of MIEMSS (agency use).

2. Employee Access

Trustees may access social media sites from any State-owned computer. A personal computer may be used by a Trustee to access social media sites if the computer has security software commensurate with that available on State-owned computers.

3. Account Management

Any employee wishing to create a social media account on behalf of MIEMSS, i.e. become a Trustee, must have written authorization from his or her direct supervisor and MIEMSS's Public Information Officer (PIO).

A Trustee account may be disabled by the PIO for violating the provisions of this policy.

The Social Media Manager will be responsible for maintaining a list of all social media site domain names that are in use or have been in use, the names of all employee Trustees, their associated user identifications, and passwords for each account. Trustees shall use a unique miemss.org email created specifically for social media accounts, not their personal or official miemss.org email.

Should a MIEMSS Trustee of an account leave MIEMSS for any reason, it is the PIO's or the PIO's designee's responsibility to designate another MIEMSS employee to be a Trustee, remove the former employee's administrative permissions to the site, and assign a new password to the site.

4. Acceptable Use

Trustees using social media as official representatives are subject to MIEMSS policy on E-mail and Internet Usage.

5. Employee Conduct

Trustees representing MIEMSS via social media outlets must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of MIEMSS and will provide professional-level comments or content. MIEMSS employees that are social media Trustees do not need to personally identify themselves on each post, but content that is written by employees acting in their official capacity should be properly cited and fully supported.

6. Content

The Public Information Officer or the Public Information Officer's designee will monitor content on each of the Department social media sites to ensure adherence to the Social Media Policy for appropriate use, message and branding consistent with MIEMSS Social Media Purpose Statement.

Social media postings discussing, related to, or including the following are not permitted:

- a. Items in litigation or that are likely be in litigation in the future
- b. Legal advice
- c. Personal or private matters of the Trustee or other MIEMSS employees
- d. Personal, sensitive, or confidential information of any kind
- e. Unauthorized personal opinions that purport to be officially endorsed by MIEMSS
- f. Libelous material
- g. Combative or threatening language
- h. Copyrighted material without permission and/or appropriate credit given
- i. Any other material prohibited by MIEMSS's E-mail and Internet Usage policy

Wherever possible, links to more information should direct users back to MIEMSS's official website for more information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with MIEMSS.

7. Branding

The MIEMSS logo, legal name, and links to its official website shall appear on all social media sites for which a public profile is created.

8. Security

Opening social networking channels can lead to security risks to both the Trustee's computer and the MIEMSS network. In order to minimize the risk for malware and viruses, the following actions are not permitted while engaging in social media activity:

- a. Instant messaging
- b. File exchanges, such as creating an unauthorized FTP site, through a social media site. This provision shall not be construed to contradict MIEMSS E-mail and Internet Usage policy on file transfers "within and among state agencies, as well as other job related entities."
- c. Game playing or using other applications where information from a MIEMSS computer may be downloaded to a third-party site
- d. Downloading software or other applications through a social media site without permission from MIEMSS IT Department
- e. "Friending" or "following" other individuals, groups, companies, etc. while logged in to a social media site as a Trustee
- f. Downloading unknown attachments without scanning each one with anti-virus tools available on each MIEMSS computer

- g. Clicking on a link posted by “followers” or “fans” without verifying its safety and authenticity

To minimize the risk of cyber attacks, Trustees must:

- a. use a different password for each social media account,
- b. share their password only with the Social Media Manager, or MIEMSS Executive Director or the Executive Director’s designee upon request, and
- c. use a password different from that used for their current MIEMSS internal network account.

9. Legal Issues

MIEMSS Trustees who engage in social media on behalf of the agency shall adhere to all applicable state, federal, and local laws, regulations, and policies.

- a. Account Creation

When a Trustee creates an account on a social media site, they generally must click one or more buttons indicating acceptance of the social media site’s terms and conditions. By accepting this responsibility, the Trustee has created a legal document that carries inherent risks for the individual and for MIEMSS. This policy gives legal authority for a Trustee to enter into this legal agreement upon approval by his or her direct supervisor and the PIO. Trustees are responsible for abiding by the social media site’s Terms of Service or other applicable user policies and rules.

- b. Public Records

The Social Media Manager is responsible for ensuring that the following statement appears on each social media site for which a MIEMSS account is created:

“Representatives of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) communicate via this site. Consequently, any communication by a MIEMSS employee or the general public may be subject to monitoring and disclosure to third parties. Any electronic content posted or maintained on this social media site, including a list of subscribers, is a public record. Public disclosure requests must be directed to MIEMSS Public Information Officer.”

- c. Records Retention

Online communications must be managed, archived, and capable of retrieval in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and other e-discovery laws and policies.

10. Citizen Conduct

Individuals or groups that wish to engage with MIEMSS on a social media site must comply with the Terms of Use, below.

- a. Terms of Use

- i. Social media site articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content will not be allowed:
 1. Comments not topically related to the particular article to which they are posted;
 2. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
 3. Profane language or content;
 4. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, genetics, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or intellectual disability, or sexual orientation;
 5. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 6. Solicitations of commerce;
 7. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 8. Personally identifiable medical information;
 9. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems or criminal or civil investigations; or
 10. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party;
 - ii. MIEMSS reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law. Content that violates this policy or other applicable law shall be retained for one (1) year along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting. MIEMSS also reserves the right to terminate a user's access to its social media profile for repeated violations of these Terms of Use;
 - iii. Content posted by MIEMSS staff may include embedded hyperlinks. Although MIEMSS will make every effort to evaluate hyperlinks prior to posting content, MIEMSS cannot guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, accessibility, appropriateness, or security of any hyperlink or the content linked thereto;
 - iv. User-generated content (i.e., not generated by MIEMSS) may be subject to the Creative Commons Attribution License;
 - v. References to information not originating from MIEMSS, including advertisements on this site, do not constitute an endorsement;
 - vi. These Terms of Use are subject to amendment or revision at any time without prior notification.
- b. These above Terms of Use shall either:
 - i. Appear directly on the social media site or;

- ii. Be hosted on MIEMSS's official website with a hyperlink from the social media site.

Public/Private Designation: Public - This document is approved for publication and unrestricted distribution.

Policy approved by MIEMSS:

Date: 8/13/2012
9/11/2012

Signature: 
Robert R. Bass, MD, FACEP
Executive Director