



HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policy:	Social Media Policy	
Date:	Revision Date:	Approved by:
August 27, 2015		Human Resources

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To ensure that the public is informed about activities and messages of Eastern Municipal Water District (“District”) by maintaining positive media relations, ensuring that accurate information is provided to the media and public in a timely manner and providing social media communication guidance to District employees and various entities or individuals that work or act on behalf of the District. The scope of this policy does not limit employees’ rights to engage in legitimate concerted labor related activities as defined by law.

POLICY

Utilizing all forms of media, including social media, is important to the District’s communications to customers and stakeholders. Inquiries from the news media are a high priority and must be responded to by the appropriate person as quickly and efficiently as possible. Only authorized spokespersons, designated by the General Manager or designee, may approve, create, publish, or post District content and comments to media or social media sites on behalf of the District.

At the District we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions, including discussions about your working conditions, with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established this policy and guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all employees, including temporary employees, contractors, interns, part-time and full-time employees who work for the District or others associated with the District such as volunteers. However, this policy is not intended to, nor will be enforced in a manner, that restrains employees from exercising their rights protected under Federal and State law.

GUIDELINES

All contact by the media (newspaper, radio, television, etc.) regarding activities/projects of the District, where such contact involves or relates to external District matters and does not concern the discussion or disclosure of employees' terms and conditions of employment, should be directed to the Sr. Director of Public & Governmental Affairs or designee.

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet. This is a broad term intended to include currently available and future forms of internet communications. For example, this may include internet communications to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, news or opinion forums, comments on news sites, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the District, as well as any other form of electronic communication that currently exists or becomes available at some future date.

The same principles and guidelines found in the District policies and Values & Beliefs apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects members of the public, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of the District or the District's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. However, the District may not and shall not discipline any employee for engaging in on-line/social media activities that are protected under Federal and/or State law.

POLICY AMPLIFICATION:

1. Public Representations

Employees may indicate their affiliation with Eastern Municipal Water District in professional business-related communications only. Affiliation with Eastern Municipal Water District is inferred through the use of the District's E-mail system. For purposes of this Policy, "Business Communications" means and includes Union communications that concern, relate and/or pertain to the terms and conditions of District employees.

Care must be taken to properly structure comments and questions posted to mailing lists, public news groups, and related public posting on the Internet (e.g., social media). If a user is working on Eastern Municipal Water District matters, all related posting must be cleared or otherwise authorized through the Sr. Director of Public and Governmental Affairs or senior management (i.e., General Manager, Deputy General Manager or Assistant General Manager) prior to being placed on the Internet. Any posting relating

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to protected Union activities or comments regarding an employee's terms and conditions of employment are exempt from the foregoing requirement.

2. Know and Follow the Rules

Carefully read these guidelines, the District's Ethics Policy, the District's Harassment Policy, and the District's Administrative Code including policies associated with the current Memorandum of Understanding between the District and IBEW Local 1436, and make certain your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and will subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- Do not engage in "tagging" (@ or #) EMWD/EasternMuni/Eastern Municipal Water District or similar references to the District on Facebook or other social media sites unless you are an authorized District spokesperson.
- Include in any social media posting referencing the District, its activities, employees, management, consultants, vendors, customers or members of the Board of Directors with the following clarifying statement:

"The postings on this site are my own and do not reflect the official views of the District, the Board of Directors, or management staff."

- Do not use (#) EMWD/EasternMuni/Eastern Municipal Water District on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter or other social media platforms.
- Do not take negative or inappropriate pictures/videos of EMWD facilities, staff, documents or work spaces; do not post them on your personal sites and/or share them on public sites including Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, Vine, Twitter, YouTube or other social media sites. This prohibition does not include, extend to, or cover images that relate to any Union matter or other protected activity.
- Do not "check-in" at EMWD on any social media platform when you arrive at work, or during work time.

3. Be Respectful

Always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, contractors, stakeholders to include elected officials and legislators, customers, members of the public, suppliers or people who work on behalf of the District. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your supervisor, co-workers or by utilizing the Ethics Hotline or the grievance procedure in the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as opposed to posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious,

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obscene, threatening, or that disparages customers, members of the public, employees or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or District policy. However, this paragraph shall not be construed or interpreted as barring or in any way prohibiting internet/social media postings that relate to employees' working conditions or other protected activity.

4. Be Honest and Accurate

Do not post information about the District in a manner through which you hold yourself out as an authorized representative of the District, as this is the role and responsibility of the District's Public and Governmental Affairs Department. If you are an authorized District spokesperson, and must post information about the District as part of your job, make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post information you know to be false about the District, Board members, fellow employees, local elected officials, members of the public, customers, suppliers, other stakeholders, and people working on behalf of the District or other public agencies. The term "information" as used in this policy does not include employees' wages and conditions of employment.

5. Post Only Appropriate Content

Maintain the confidentiality of the District's private or confidential information. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications (again "confidential" is defined as excluding information about wage and employment conditions). Do not respond to news posts or forums as a representative of the District. Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for the District. Only Board members, District senior managers or the Public and Governmental Affairs Department are authorized to post content about the District. If you do post online material related to the work you do or subjects associated with the District, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the District. It is best to include a disclaimer such as:

"The postings on this site are my own and do not reflect the official views of the District, the Board of Directors, or management staff."

6. Using Social Media at Work

Your use of social media while on your work time or on District provided equipment is discouraged. In no case should your use of social media, or other forms of electronic communications including instant messaging or “chats”, interfere with your ability to perform your job as expected. If it does, supervisors are authorized to take corrective measures including disciplinary action, unless your use of social media occurs in the context of protected activity (e.g., documenting matters for the filing of a employee grievances, or investigating employee grievances, etc.). Work-related social media use, as authorized by your manager or otherwise consistent with the District Policy, is permitted. If you have any questions about your use of social media on District work time or on District equipment, you should first speak with your supervisor. Do not use the District email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use. An authorized exception includes professional networking through LinkedIn that have a business related purpose.

7. Retaliation is Prohibited

The District prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation or for utilizing social media in a manner that is protected under Federal and/or State law. Any employee who retaliates against another employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

8. Electronic Communication/Electronic Mail Retention and Records Management

Any form of electronic communication, including social media or electronic mail, is the property of Eastern Municipal Water District and District staff must follow the established document retention policies and procedures for records management.

For More Information

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact your supervisor or HR representative.