



# WARREN COUNTY FIRE ACADEMY



## Social Media / Mobile Devices

### **SUBJECT: Social Media / Mobile Devices**

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### Section 1: **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This policy sets forth the parameters for the usage and carrying of mobile phones and/or other personal electronic devices for Academy staff and Academy attendees.
- 1.2 The policy shall also govern the use of social media as it relates to your role as a member or attendee, to outline the acceptable use of electronic devices or systems, whether or not the property of the Academy and to set forth the guidelines for prohibited and permissible content when utilizing social media forums.
- 1.3 The policy is established to protect the Academy's members and attendees, confidential and proprietary information and reputation/image of the Academy.

### Section 2: **DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1 Social Media: any internet or mobile digital technology and systems used to share and/or receive information or conversation. This policy is intended to cover public social media (as opposed to Academy media such as a J&B Learning).
- 2.2 Mobile Devices: cell phones, I-Pads or similar, computers, notebooks, pagers, portable radios, or any other electronic communication devices.

### Section 3: **MOBILE PHONES / DEVICES**

- 3.1 The use of mobile phones / devices by Academy staff members is un-restricted regarding making a receiving phone calls.
- 3.2 The use of mobile phone / devices for students enrolled in Fire Academy courses.
  - 3.2.1 All phones shall be set to vibrate or silent mode.
  - 3.2.2 Incoming calls shall only be answered during breaks.



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- 3.2.3 Any other use of the mobile device shall be prohibited unless approved by a supervisor.
- 3.2.4 Any student/s found not complying or abusing this policy shall be subject to having their privileges revoked and possible disciplinary actions.
- 3.2.5 Students may provide the Academy phone number to family members to utilize in the event of an emergency.

### Section 4: **SOCIAL MEDIA PERSONAL SITE GUIDELINES**

- 4.1 The Academy respects the individual rights of its employees and attendees to participate in social networking activities. The Academy also recognizes its responsibility to communicate to employees the professional risks associated with participation in a non-work-related social networking. If an employee enters an interaction on social media, the employee or attendee risks being exposed to public reaction that may call into question his/her integrity and professionalism. Therefore, it is the position of the Academy to encourage staff and attendees to exercise caution when participating in social networking.
- 4.2 All should remember that the public may judge the Academy based on the utterances of an individual. Hence when participating in a social networking site, always attempt to be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinion of others, and not subject the institution to public embarrassment or negative attention.
- 4.3 An employee or attendee who strongly disparages the students, employees or citizens served by the Academy can impair the Academy's ability to carry out its mission. We must recognize that members of the public may not necessarily distinguish between an employee's or attendee's public vs. personal persona on social media. Therefore, individuals must act judiciously when posting information or materials about the Academy or the local community.
- 4.4 An employee or attendee shall not undertake any social media activity during work or training periods unless assigned to do so by a supervisor.
- 4.5 Employees and attendees may not use social media to publish confidential materials of the Academy
- 4.6 Employees and attendees should use only official academy communication networks to conduct academy business. The use of the Academy name, logo or image to advertise events or to solicit business on social networks is prohibited without prior Academy permission.



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- 4.7 Employees and attendees should be aware that they may be held legally liable for what is posted on their own site and on the sites of others where they have attributed information. Conversely, the Academy cannot be held liable for the utterances of an employee acting without the expressed written approval of the Academy.
- 4.8 Employees and attendees are free to endorse whatever product, cause or political party that they desire, as long as such endorsement does not have the appearance that it is related to the employee's or attendee's employment or affiliation with the Academy. The use of the Academy name to promote or endorse any product, cause or political party or candidate is prohibited.
- 4.9 The lines of professional and personal relationships can become blurred in a social media situation. Communication on social media with other employees and, especially, individual students, has the potential to create confusion regarding the role of the employee who is posting or commenting on information. Employees are cautioned to ensure that they maintain a professional relationship on social media with students and colleagues. In particular, employees should be careful not to open themselves up to possible complaints of a violation of academy harassment, bullying or intimidation policies based on an employee-student or employee-employee relationship.
- 4.10 Employees are advised to take care to ensure that their social media activities reach the audience that is intended. The use of privacy settings can significantly reduce the possibility that a casual remark, joke, etc. is not misinterpreted by someone who was not intended to see the information.

## Section 5: **REPEALER**

- 5.1 Any order, policy or directive of a previous administration on this subject matter and in conflict with it is hereby repealed.
- 5.2 Should another order, policy or directive of this administration appear to conflict with this general order it shall be brought to the attention of the Academy Coordinator who shall make the determination and issue amending orders, if needed.
- 5.3 This policy is not in conflict with similar policies set forth by the County of Warren, Warren County Department of Public Safety, or the Warren County Community College.