St. John's Regional Fire Department
Policy and Operational Guidelines

Title: 01-03-10	The Use of Social Media
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Section:	03 Administration
Title:	10 The Use of Social Media

Purpose

To establish guidelines on the use of social media in relation to the St. John's Regional Fire Department (SJRFD) and its members.

This POG is meant to clarify and provide guidance in what constitutes unacceptable postings of SJRFD information and images as well to best enhance and protect the reputation of the SJRFD and its members

Background

This replaces POG #01-03-10, "The Use of Social Media", dated 2013/03/04.

Social media are powerful communication vehicles with the potential to have a significant impact on organizational and professional reputations.

Social media is defined as content created by individuals through the internet using tools such as Facebook, Blogs, Snapchat, You Tube, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, etc.

Procedure

1. While SJRFD members have a right to the use of social media during off-duty hours, as SJRFD members, he/she shall avoid using his/her position, status or uniform to:
    - Make statements about SJRFD policies and operational guidelines or City matters that can be reasonably interpreted as being the SJRFD's point of view.
    - Make statements that would bring the SJRFD's reputation into disrepute.
    - Make statements or release information from knowledge that could be gathered in the course of his/her duties.

2. Any personal use of social media by SJRFD members shall be restricted to off-duty hours.
3. Members shall not post videos, images or text that in any way could be misinterpreted as representing the SJRFD without the express consent of the Director of Regional Fire and Emergency Services **(Fire Chief)** or designate.
4. Members shall not post images of personnel on duty, departmental property, electronic messages discussing official business, incident calls or scene investigations.
5. SJRFD's logo shall not be used without permission of the Director of Regional Fire and Emergency Services **(Fire Chief)** or designate.
6. Members shall not post anything that is false, misleading, obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, libelous, threatening, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to a fellow member of the SJRFD.
7. Violations under this POG could result in charges being laid under SJRFD Act or the collective agreement. Such actions could also result in legal liability, criminal charges, human rights or privacy complaints.

NOTE 1:
It is important to remember that any information or comments published on social media sites:
· *May remain in the public sphere or in circulation for an indefinite time*
· *Can be republished on other websites, blogs etc.*
· *Can be copied, used and amended by others.*
· *Could be changed to misrepresent what was said.*

All Operational Guidelines are provided as a guideline only and may be altered by the OIC to meet extenuating circumstances.

Approvals
The Director/Chief of SJRFD

Responsibility
St. John's Regional Fire Department

POG#01-03-10
Approved By:

Date: Sept 17, 2025

Sherry Colford
Director of Regional Fire and Emergency Services
(Fire Chief)

Appendix/Appendices
None