NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
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NGB-PA 3 JUNE 14

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Social Media Guidance for National Guard Members

1. References.

a. Deputy Secretary of Defense Instruction 8550.01 DoD Internet Services and Internet-Based Capabilities, September 11, 2012.

b. Army Social Media Handbook, Version 3.1, JAN 13.

c. Air Force Social Media Guide, 4th Edition, 01 JUN 13.

d. National Guard Pamphlet 360-5, 06 JUN 08.

2. Purpose. This memorandum provides simple, easy-to-follow tips that will help you use social media in your professional and personal life. This guide is for amplification purposes and does not replace official DoD, Service-specific nor State and Local Command policies.

3. Background. National Guard military and civilian members are encouraged to use social media to share their experiences and to conduct themselves online in a safe and professional manner worthy of their status and calling to support and defend the American people.

4. Official Use. Official online posts involve content released in an official capacity by a National Guard public affairs office. Official contact information, such as official duty telephone numbers or postal and email addresses, should be used to establish official-use accounts when such information is required. Posting internal documents or information that the National Guard has not officially released to the public is prohibited, including memos, emails, meeting notes, message traffic, white papers, public affairs guidance, drill weekend or other training guidance, pre-decisional materials, investigatory information and proprietary information.

5. Personal Use. National Guard members are personally responsible for all content that they publish on social networking sites, blogs or other websites. Personal contact information, such as personal telephone numbers or postal and email address, should be used with discretion to establish personal-use social media accounts. Guard

members must comply with their State, Territory or District guidelines and with Army or Air Force guidelines for use of social media. When assigned to a federal mission, Guard members are subject to disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Guard members should be mindful that reviewing posts on public and social networking sites may be used as part of character evaluations and background checks for security clearances.

6. Tips on Using Social Media.

a. Guard members may identify themselves as and include their rank, military component and status. However, if they decide not to identify themselves as Guard members, they should not disguise, impersonate or misrepresent their identity or affiliation with the National Guard.

b. When expressing personal opinions, Guard members should make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the National Guard. They are also encouraged to use a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and don't represent the National Guard's positions or opinions."

c. As with other forms of personal public engagement, Guard members must avoid offensive and inappropriate behavior that could bring discredit upon themselves and the National Guard. This includes posting any defamatory, libelous, obscene, abusive, threatening, racially or ethnically hateful or otherwise offensive or illegal information or material.

d. Correcting errors and misrepresentations made by others about the National Guard should be done professionally and respectfully, not emotionally. Guard members should contact their chain of command or public affairs office for guidance if they are uncertain about the need for a response.

e. When posting political content, Guard members must adhere to policy in Department of Defense Directive 1344.10. They should also not imply National Guard endorsement of any opinions, products or causes other than those already officially endorsed by the National Guard.

f. Guard members should use privacy settings on social networking sites so only their “friends” can view their photos and updates. They should also recognize that social network "friends" and "followers" could affect determinations in background investigations for security clearances.

g. The National Guard, Army or Air Force logo and other symbols may be used in unofficial posts as long as the symbols are used in a manner that does not bring discredit upon the Guard, result in personal financial gain or give the impression of official or implied endorsement.

7. Safety.

a. Guard members should not release personal identifiable information, such as Social Security number, home address or driver's license number that could be used to distinguish their individual identity or that of another Guardsman.

b. Guard members are also not allowed to release National Guard email addresses, telephone numbers or fax numbers not already authorized for public release. By piecing together information provided on different websites, criminals can use information to impersonate Guard members and steal passwords.

c. Guard members should not post information that would infringe upon the privacy, proprietary or personal rights of others or use any words, logos or other marks that would infringe upon the trademark, service mark, certification mark, or other intellectual property rights of the owners of such marks without the permission of the owners.

d. Finally, Guard members should review their accounts daily for possible use or changes by unauthorized users and should install and maintain current anti-virus and anti-spyware software on their personal computers.

8. Point of Contact. For answers to social media questions, Guard members should contact their local public affairs office or the National Guard Bureau Social Media Team at ngbpa.socialmedia@mail.mil.

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