



Santa Clara Police

Training Flash



OPERATIONS MANUAL- POLICY 96.8 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Proactive community policing includes face-to-face interactions, programs, services, events, community meetings, etc. that build relationships between our Department and the residents, businesses, places of worship, schools, non-profit organizations and visitors we serve.

Fulfilling our commitment to engage with the community includes a web and social media program to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange. The office of the Chief of Police maintains several medium (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor, Nixle, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube, eNotify and the City/SCPD website) to meet the diverse interests and needs of our community.

Whether it be in person or online, community policing adds public value and is intended to:

- Make the public aware of programs, services and facilities
- Provide the community with crime prevention strategies
- Educate the public on community crime trends, road closures and police activity
- Seek the public's assistance with investigations
- Increase the public perception of safety
- Foster community involvement
- Increase community perceptions of confidence and trust in law enforcement
- Seek future employees and volunteers

Policy 96.8 establishes the Department's position on the management of employee and volunteer use of social media and provides guidance on its management, administration and oversight. **Department employees and volunteers are reminded to follow the standards set forth in this policy whether on or off duty.** The following FAQ's are meant to ensure employees and volunteers have a clear understanding of the Department's expectations.

- Are employees and volunteers allowed to access social media sites during their work hours?
 - No, except during designated breaks.
- Are employees and volunteers allowed to Like, Share, Retweet Department issued posts?
 - Absolutely! Employees and volunteers are encouraged to follow the Department and help spread its' messaging.
- Are employees and volunteers allowed to Comment on Department issued posts?
 - It depends. Congratulating a colleague on an award is appropriate. Providing information about a road closure, police activity, a case, contract/MOU negotiations or political activity would be in violation of this Policy.
- Are employees and volunteers allowed to disseminate information that hasn't been distributed to the public by the Department?
 - No. Unless information is disseminated by the Department, it should not be released.
- Can individuals disclose their place of employment / volunteerism on professional websites?
 - The Department recommends against identifying yourself as a police officer for the Santa Clara Police Department. However, we should all proudly share we are City of Santa Clara employees.

- Can employees or volunteers post photographs that identify them as an employee or volunteer of this Department?
 - No. This Policy extends to the City and Department logo, badge, patch, uniform and equipment.
- Can employees post or disseminate photographs, video, audio files or text messages that relate to Department business (e.g. police report, crime scene, contraband, arrestee, law enforcement equipment, etc.)?
 - No.
- Can employees pose with a weapon for a photograph or video to be utilized online?
 - No. This Policy includes pictures or videos taken at special events, stadium events, trainings and operations with partner law enforcement agencies. Department produced media (e.g. recruitment video) is exempt from this Policy.
- Can an employee or volunteer make statements online on behalf of the Department without permission from the Chief of Police?
 - No. Furthermore, all media inquiries should be directed to the Public Information Officer.
- What should an employee or volunteer do if they observe inaccurate information posted online?
 - Inaccurate information (e.g. active shooter at Great America, threat of violence at the Art and Wine Festival, etc.) should be reported immediately by taking a screenshot and forwarding the information in a timely manner to the Public Information Officer; the next course of action will be determined by the PIO/Office of the Chief of Police.

Employees and volunteers should not Like, Share or Retweet the post, respond or add clarifying information to inaccurate posts.

- What should you do if you believe you are in violation of this Policy?
 - Please consider editing or removing the content and/or corresponding photographs / videos to bring it into compliance.
- What should an employee or volunteer do if they observe an individual in violation of the Policy?
 - Any employee having first-hand knowledge of a posting or web page in violation of any provision of this policy shall notify their immediate supervisor.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Policy 96.8, please reach out to Assistant Chief of Police, Dan Winter.

cc: Saskia Lagergren, Lieutenant and Public Information Officer

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