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Issued by the EPA Chief Information Officer,
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19, dated 07/07/2005

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the principles for the use of social media at EPA. For purposes of this policy, "social media" is a term for a wide-spectrum of user-driven content technologies.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to EPA employees, contractors, and other personnel acting in an official capacity on behalf of EPA when using social media for official EPA purposes on the Intranet and the Internet, whether such use occurs on the EPA Website or third-party sites.

This policy does not apply to EPA employees using social media tools for personal use while using government-owned office equipment; such use is covered by EPA Order 2100.3 A1, "Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Policy."

This policy does not apply to EPA employees using social media in their personal capacities; however, employees are always required to follow the Standards of Ethical Conduct and the Hatch Act.

This policy does not supersede or replace existing legal responsibilities and policies in effect.

3. AUDIENCE

The audience for this policy includes any EPA employee, contractor, or other person who uses social media on behalf of EPA.

4. BACKGROUND

Much like the Internet transformed information during the 1990's, social media is a 21st century phenomenon that offers a new and constantly emerging range of opportunities for networking, collaborating, and information-sharing. EPA is using social media tools to create a more effective and transparent government, to engage the public and EPA's partners, and to facilitate internal collaboration.   Social media provides another set of tools to help EPA accomplish its mission.

The benefits of using social media in support of EPA's mission include increased ability for the Agency to engage and collaborate with partners, notably the American public. With the benefits and opportunities of social media come risks for security and privacy. It is important that EPA weigh both the benefits and the risks before using social media tools. In addition, there are legal issues and federal requirements that are unique to the government, such as privacy, Section 508 compliance (accessibility), records management, procurement rules, and staff participation on external sites that directly impact EPA employees' use of social media tools. EPA will use these tools only in support of

its mission.

It is important to note that many laws, regulations, and policies were written before the inception of social media tools. EPA procedures, standards, and guidance will ensure that EPA follows existing laws, regulations, and policies while launching social media applications; at the same time, EPA will work with appropriate federal government entities to revise laws and policies as necessary.

5. **AUTHORITY**
President Barack Obama memorandum, "Transparency and Open Government," January 21, 2009
http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/TransparencyandOpenGovernment/

Director Peter R. Orszag memorandum, OMB M-10-06, "Open Government Directive," December 8, 2009 http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-06.pdf

Director Peter R. Orszag memorandum, OMB M-10-23, "Guidance for Agency use of Third-party Websites and Applications," June 25, 2010
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-23.pdf

Administrator Cass R. Sunstein memorandum, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget "Social Media, Web-Based Interactive Technologies, and the Paperwork Reduction Act," April 7, 2010
http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/inforeg/SocialMediaGuidance_04072010.pdf

Administrator Lisa P. Jackson memorandum, "Transparency in EPA's Operations," April 23, 2009

Chief Information Officer Molly A. O'Neill memorandum, "EPA and Web 2.0 Technologies," December 17, 2007

US EPA Information Access Strategy, January 2009

US EPA Public Involvement Policy, May 2003

6. **POLICY**
It is EPA's policy to use social media where appropriate in order to meet its mission of protecting human health and the environment.

Agency product review processes in place for regional and program offices apply to EPA's use of social media.

EPA will only use third-party sites that have been approved for Agency use, and such use must be in accordance with approved Terms of Service (ToS) agreements. A listing of all TOS agreements in place are found at:
https://www.epa.gov/webguide/create-and-maintain-content

EPA will not use third-party social media sites to collect personally identifiable information.

EPA must comply with applicable federal laws, regulations, and requirements including but not limited to records management, Section 508 access for persons with disabilities, privacy, and information security in its social media use.

When using social media tools and third-party sites, whether on behalf of EPA or on their own time, EPA employees are bound by the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, 5 C.F.R. Part 2635.

7. **RELATED DOCUMENTS**
Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996 (absorbed under Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996) (40 U.S.C. § 1401)

Records Management by Federal Agencies (44 U.S.C. Chapter 31)

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794(d)), as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220), August 7, 1998

Privacy Act - Records maintained on individuals (5 U.S.C. § 552(a))

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1980, as amended; Paperwork Reduction Reauthorization Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35)

EPA Order 2100.3 A1, "Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment Policy," 04/02/2004 http://intranet.epa.gov/rmpolicy/ads/orders/2100.3A1.pdf

CIO Policy 2180.0 "Web Governance and Management," 09/07/2006 http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/policies/21800.pdf

CIO Policy 2100.1 "Accessible Electronic and Information Technology," 04/05/2006 http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/policies/2130.pdf

CIO Policy 2150.0 "Agency Network Security Policy," 11/27/2007 http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/policies/21500.pdf

CIO Policy 2151.0 "Privacy Policy," 09/27/07 http://www.epa.gov/privacy/policy/2151/

CIO Policy 2155.1 "Records Management," 06/08/2009 http://www.epa.gov/records/policy/2155/rm_policy_cio_2155_1_2.pdf

CIO Policy 2182.0, "Children Privacy and Children's Copyright Issues," 10/25/2007 http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/ciopolicy/2182.p.pdf

CIO Policy 2181.0, "Posting Copyrighted Works on EPA Web Site," 10/25/2007 http://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/policies/2181p.pdf

CIO Policy 2171.0, "Information Access Policy," 01/24/2008 http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/ciopolicy/2171.0.pdf

IRM Policy Manual 2100: Chapter 9 - Information Collection, 2/29/96 http://intranet.epa.gov/ohr/rmpolicy/ads/manuals/Chaptr09.PDF

EPA FOIA Regulations http://www.epa.gov/foia/foiaregs.htm

EPA Web 2.0 Whitepaper, February 2008 http://intranet.epa.gov/webgroup/meetings/02-08/presentations/web20/Web_2/web20whitepaper.pdf

8. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
   The Chief Information Officer/Assistant Administrator, Office of Environmental Information, and the Associate Administrator for External Affairs and Environmental Education are jointly responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy.

   Office of Environmental Information (OEI) applies the requirements of this policy in its functions of providing appropriate Agency-wide web technology services and security, policy, guidance, and technical assistance to Program and Regional offices. OEI develops policy and procedures for social media use in consultation with OEAEE.

   Office of External Affairs and Environmental Education (OEAEE) applies the requirements of this policy in its functions of managing communications and product review. OEAEE also develops Terms of Service agreements with third-party sites in consultation with OEI and the Office of General Counsel. OEAEE develops and implements social media awareness training in conjunction with OEI.

   Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides legal guidance relating to the Web, reviews and approves terms of service, and oversees ethics requirements for EPA employees.

   Office of Policy (OP) - applies the requirements of this policy in its function of setting Agency-wide standards and guidance for the rulemaking process and coordinating EPA rulemakings.

   Office of the Inspector General (OIG) will adhere to the Social Media Policy to the extent that it is not inconsistent with the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, or with the policies, procedures, and guidelines established by the Office of Inspector General.

   Senior Information Officials (SIOs) serve as the primary point of accountability for the effective oversight, coordination, and management of information and information technology (IT) within their respective organizations and are responsible for ensuring that their office is in compliance with EPA's Social Media Policy, procedures and supporting documents.

   Information Management Officers (IMOs) support their respective SIO in implementing the SIO's information technology and information management functions and responsibilities.

   Communication Directors in program offices are responsible for managing communications from their organizations, including Web efforts.

   Public Affairs Directors at Regional Offices are responsible for managing communications from their organizations, including Web efforts.

   Web Content Coordinators, as members of the Web Council, are responsible for working with their respective regional and program offices to discuss appropriate social media usage for that office in accordance with OEAEE and OEI web policy and web practices. A listing of the coordinators is found at: http://www.epa.gov/webgovernance/leadership.html

   Web Infrastructure Coordinators, as members of the Web Council, are responsible for working with their respective regional and program offices to discuss appropriate social media usage for that office in accordance with OEAEE and OEI web policy and web practices. A listing of the coordinators is found at: http://www.epa.gov/webgovernance/leadership.html

   Agency Privacy Officer - National program manager for Agency's National Privacy Program. Develops Agency level privacy policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines; leads Agency efforts to protect PII; provides direction and oversight of Agency's privacy responsibilities, reports to the Senior

Agency Official for Privacy and the Office of Management and Budget on privacy compliance and administration activities.

Information Security Officer (ISO) - Designated by the Assistant Administrator (AA), Regional Administrator (RA), Inspector General (IG), or General Counsel for their respective organizations. The ISO ensures that information resources under his/her purview are managed and protected appropriately. The primary role of an ISO is to ascertain that a current information security program is in place for his/her respective organization and that the information is properly managed from an information security perspective.

Records Liaison Officer (RLO) - A person responsible for overseeing a records management program in a headquarters or field office in cooperation with the agency records management officer.

Regional and program offices provide quality content and appropriate infrastructure and resources to communicate the Agency's work and mission on the web. Regional and program offices may provide additional procedures and guidance as needed to meet their respective priorities, provided they do not conflict with those that apply to the Agency as a whole. Ultimate accountability for Region and program areas on the web is at the most senior level, typically at the Assistant Administrator or Regional Administrator level.

9. DEFINITIONS

Social Media - any online tool or application that goes beyond simply providing information, instead allowing collaboration, interaction, and sharing. Examples of social media include: blogs; microblogs; wikis; photo and video sharing; podcasts; virtual worlds; social networking; social news and bookmarking; web conferencing and webcasting.

Third-party website – for purposes of this policy, any website that is not owned, operated or co-sponsored by EPA. Refers to sites as a whole; EPA accounts on such sites are still third-party, even though EPA controls the content of those accounts.

10. WAIVERS

There are no waivers from this policy.

11. RELATED PROCEDURES, STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE

Using Social Media Internally at EPA Procedure, CIO 2184.0-P01.1 (http://intranet.epa.gov/oeiintra/imitpolicy/policies.htm June 20, 2011)

Using Social Media to Communicate with the Public Procedure, CIO 2184.0-P02.1 (http://intranet.epa.gov/oeiintra/imitpolicy/policies.htm June 20, 2011)

Representing EPA Online Using Social Media Procedure, CIO 2184.0-P03.1 (http://intranet.epa.gov/oeiintra/imitpolicy/policies.htm June 20, 2011)

Requirements for creating, customizing, and maintaining Web products on the Agency's Public Access and Intranet servers are found at: http://www.epa.gov/webguide

Procedures and processes for creating, customizing, and maintaining EPA products using social media are found at http://yosemite.epa.gov/OEI/webguide.nsf/socialmedia

Requirements for creating, customizing, and maintaining Web products on the Agency's Public Access and Intranet servers are found at http://www.epa.gov/webguide including all design

requirements for public access EPA web pages at:
http://yosemite.epa.gov/oei/webguide.nsf/standards-guidance

Terms of Service agreements can be found on the EPA Webguide at:
https://www.epa.gov/webguide/create-and-maintain-content

EPA Order CIO2101.0 A1, "Policy on Limited Personal Use of Government Office Equipment," covers limited personal use of government-owned office equipment.
http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/ciopolicy/2101-0.pdf

Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch, 5 C.F.R. Part 2635,
http://www.usoge.gov/ethics_docs/publications/reference_publications/rfsoc_02.pdf

Interim Guidance, "Representing EPA Online Using Social Media", 01/26/2010
http://yosemite.epa.gov/OEI/webguide.nsf/socialmedia/representing_epa_online

Best practices and general information about EPA and social media can be found on the Social Media @ EPA blog: http://blog.epa.gov/socialmedia/

All Office of Environmental Information (OEI) Information Management and Information Technology (IM/IT) policies are located at: http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/policies.htm

EPA's administrative policies issued through the Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM) Directives Clearance Review Process are located at: http://intranet.epa.gov/policy/index.htm

Federal Web requirements, best practices, and guidance are found at Webcontent.gov
http://www.usa.gov/webcontent/

12. MATERIAL SUPERSEDED

Not applicable.

13. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about this policy, please contact the Policy and Program Management Branch, Office of Information Analysis and Access, in the Office of Environmental Information.

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and Chief Information Officer
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