

MOTIONS FOR FACEBOOK ACCESS:

Prepared by Chairman Hawker's Office

Motion 1: I move that Legislative Council allow access to Facebook from all legislative computers for legislative business only.

If the first motion fails, we will take individual votes on these categories of users:

Motion 2: I move that Legislative Council allow access to Facebook for nonpartisan legislative agencies and their staff for legislative business only. (Nonpartisan agencies include the Legislative Affairs Agency, the Ethics office, Legislative Finance, Legislative Audit, the Ombudsman, and the Office of Victims' Rights.)

Motion 3: I move that Legislative Council allow access to Facebook for legislative press offices and webmasters for legislative business only.

Motion 4: I move that Legislative Council allow access to Facebook for legislators and their staff for legislative business only.

Please note that all Facebook access would be subject to current computer use and ethics policies. Also, should any of these motions pass, Information Services/Help Desk will also be granted access to Facebook in order to support the users.



Reply to:

□ P.O. Box 101140
Anchorage, AK 99510-1140
(907) 269-5290
(800) 478-2624
(FAX) 269-5291

January 10, 2013

The Honorable Mike Hawker, Chair
Alaska Legislative Council
State Capitol Room 502
Juneau AK, 99801

Re: Ombudsman Request to Use and Participate In Social Networking Sites

Dear Representative Hawker:

I am writing to ask that the Legislative Council amend its policy regarding legislative agency access to social networking sites as it applies to legislative agencies. Specifically I am requesting that the Legislative Council authorize the Office of the Alaska Ombudsman to use Ombudsman office equipment to access social networking sites including but not limited to Facebook, My Space, and LinkedIn in order to research ombudsman complaints as appropriate and necessary. I am also seeking permission to use social media such as Facebook for the purpose of increased citizen outreach for the Ombudsman office, and to use social media as a tool to research job applicants.

The Office of the Ombudsman, and offices of Legislative Audit and Legislative Ethics made similar requests in 2012 but the matter was tabled.

Social Media As An Investigative Tool

As the Legislative Council policy now stands, the Ombudsman and other legislative agencies are prohibited from using State of Alaska office equipment to access social media when researching citizen complaints. This has the effect of limiting the ombudsman's ability to thoroughly investigate complaints. I can provide several examples.

The Office of Children's Services has a Facebook page and Twitter account, and caseworkers often review social media sites during OCS investigations of reports of harm in Child In Need of Aide cases. In several instances, OCS has based its action on information taken from Facebook but the ombudsman has been precluded from pursuing the information while using office equipment. For example:

- OCS placed a child with one relative after the child's parent was murdered. OCS then moved the child to another relative placement because of information allegedly posted on Facebook by the first relatives. The ombudsman was unable to view the pertinent Facebook information that caused the child to be removed.
- One portion of a woman's complaint to the ombudsman specifically concerned information the complainant's mother was posting on her Facebook page. Ombudsman investigators couldn't access the pertinent information from the office, but could do so from home, so reviewed both women's Facebook public pages using personal equipment after work hours.

- A child was taken into custody because of a photo posted on the complainant's Facebook page. Ombudsman investigators weren't able to access the Facebook information from office equipment, and had to access the information from their home accounts to see what had caused OCS to take the child into custody.
- A woman complained that the Child Support Services Division had improperly eliminated the support obligation owed to her by the children's father. The father had claimed he didn't owe the support because he actually lived with the woman and their children during the time he was being charged child support. The complainant contended the father did not live with her but she had insufficient evidence to support her assertion. An ombudsman investigator checked Facebook after hours to see if the complainant's Facebook page would offer any insight into her assertion that the children's father had not lived with her at the time in question.

Social Media As An Outreach Tool

Social Media allows agencies to conduct ongoing outreach to varied and wide-spread populations. The Dayton, Ohio ombudsman, and the Ontario, Canada ombudsman are among many ombudsman offices with a very active Facebook presence. They use their sites as an educational resource for citizens as well as an outreach tool to inform citizens about how to reach them and about what they have accomplished. Many State of Alaska agencies now have a presence on Facebook and other social media in order to better reach the population they serve.

Social Media As A Hiring Tool

Social Media often is used as a hiring tool by potential employers who are concerned about the type of image their employees portray. Hiring managers of course must be cautious because social networking profiles can reveal information about an applicant's protected class information such as age, race, gender, disability, or religious beliefs. Ombudsman employees are required to be non-partisan and refrain from active participation in highly public activities that would cause someone to doubt their impartiality on issues. While employment interviews are a good tool to evaluate applicants, the information posted by an applicant on a social networking site would be another invaluable tool to assess their history.

Should Legislative Council authorize use of Facebook and other social networking media by the ombudsman, we would draft a policy governing use of social media in the ombudsman's office.

I respectfully request that the Legislative Council consider the ombudsman's request to access social networking media via State of Alaska office equipment in order to investigate complaints, to expand our outreach efforts, and to use in other office tasks as deemed appropriate. I look forward to discussing this request with you and the Legislative Council. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Linda Lord-Jenkins
State of Alaska Ombudsman

Alaska State Legislature

Select Committee on Legislative Ethics

Physical address:
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February 4, 2013

Representative Mike Hawker
Chair, Legislative Council
State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801

Representative Hawker:

Re: Access to Facebook

The Ethics Committee requests permission to access Facebook. Over the years, the committee has taken on the role of being more pro-active than reactive in helping legislators and legislative employees work through the myriad of the do's and don'ts of ethics. We anticipate questions in the future by those governed by the Ethics Act about Facebook postings; particularly since it is challenging to maintain clear lines between the professional and personal aspects of social media.

By accessing Facebook, especially during this time of tremendous growth in the use of Facebook by legislators and legislative employees, our goal is to continue to move forward in a pro-active manner and provide helpful ethics advice in the area of social media sites.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "H. Conner Thomas" with a small "(Jma)" written below the name.

H. Conner Thomas
Chair, Legislative Ethics Committee

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET AND AUDIT COMMITTEE



Division of Legislative Audit

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legaudit@akleg.gov

March 14, 2013

Representative Mike Hawker, Chair
Legislative Council
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 502
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Hawker:

RE: Facebook Page for the Division of Legislative Audit

The purpose of this letter is to request approval to publish a Facebook page for the Division of Legislative Audit. We anticipate using Facebook for the following.

- **Recruiting:** Graduates increasingly use social networking sites to seek out potential career and job opportunities. Recruiting new graduates has been challenging for our division. We believe Facebook will help us connect with the new generation of accountants and auditors.
- **Communicating:** As our society's modes of communication change, we must re-examine how best to communicate our audit results to the public. Facebook is a widely used platform for communication that may help facilitate the exchange of information between our division and other organizations and individuals.
- **Auditing:** State agencies increasingly use social networking sites such as Facebook. An audit we issued in 2011 concluded that 86 percent of state departments were using or exploring the use of social networking sites (Department of Administration, Enterprise Technology Services Division, Telecommunication Procurement and Pursuit of New Technologies, Audit Control Number 02-30058-11). Our division will need access to social networking tools in order to complete audit procedures.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this request. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (907) 465-3830.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kris Curtis", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kris Curtis, CPA, CISA
Legislative Auditor