

Cybervetting Applicants and Current Employees in Law Enforcement

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Abstract

The author discusses the exponential growth of social networking and social media sites and the impact of these media on law enforcement. The author also discusses the use of social media to screen, or “cybervet” both current law enforcement employees and law enforcement job applicants. The author conducted a survey of municipal police agencies in Florida to examine how agencies are utilizing internet resources to vet employees. After conducting the research, the author recommends that Florida police agencies adopt a Social Media policy. The author also recommends that agencies train their employees on the risks associated with social media use and that all police agencies monitor the social networking activities of both current and prospective employees.

Introduction

Cybervetting is defined, in a special report for the International Association of Chiefs of Police as “the assessment of a person’s suitability to hold a position using information found on the Internet to help make that determination” (Rose, et al, 2010). The process of cybervetting is becoming prevalent in law enforcement as we seek to screen the behaviors of candidates for employment and in some cases the behavior of current employees. The use of cybervetting, or internet vetting, is creating new problems for agency leaders as they try to make use of information that was formerly not available in a traditional background investigation. Edward Appel (2011), who wrote a leading text on internet searching, states that “at this writing, there are almost no guidelines for Internet searching. Therefore, there is virtually no scrutiny being given to the questions of whether the Internet is used, how cybervetting may be carried out, and the use of results in follow-up investigation” (p.135). Additionally, with the proliferation of social networking and the growth of the use of mobile devices to access these networking sites, the possible problems related to abuse by employees have grown exponentially. Police officers will undoubtedly be among social media users that utilize mobile devices to access the internet. According to a concepts and issues paper published in 2010 by the International Association of Chiefs of Police: “content posted by law enforcement officials on social media sites has the potential to be disseminated broadly” and “any improper postings can ultimately affect the employee’s employment and the agency as a whole” (p. 5). This paper will examine the practice of using the internet to “vet” new and current law enforcement employees in Florida. The author will also examine whether Florida police agencies have taken steps to provide guidance to officers in the form of training, standards and policy regarding cybervetting.

Literature Review

The internet is now embedded into our society and our lives. Very few facets of modern life do not in some way involve the internet. Work, shopping, entertainment, communication and even family life have been intertwined with the use of the internet and the World Wide Web. According to a 2010 survey completed by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, seventy-nine percent of adults in the United States currently use the internet. Additionally, the same survey found that ninety-five percent of persons between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine utilize the internet. These numbers are staggering when you realize that the internet has only been in existence for less than twenty-five years. Obviously, the internet has become an element of life that, though constantly changing with new technology, will continue to shape who we are and what we think for many years to come.

Three elements in internet cultural evolution have caused the world of “cyberspace” to become more intimately involved in people’s everyday lives. The first is the speed at which you can now access any and all types of information in almost any location and at any time. According to author Aaron Smith (2010), broadband internet usage has expanded to the extent that in 2010 almost two thirds of American adults currently use high speed internet at home (p. 5). The use of high speed internet as opposed to the older dial-up method has opened up new ways of file sharing and interaction on the internet that were not possible at slower speeds. Today’s graphics, voice and video interaction all depend upon a higher capacity and speed to facilitate bulkier programs.

The second element is the ability to locate information from data bases in the digital world literally in seconds. The statement that knowledge is power has never been truer. Search engines, data bases and digital libraries now make answers to almost any question just an internet search away. The use of internet browsers has streamlined the process of finding almost anything if a user just knows where to look. Internet Explorer, Netscape, Firefox and other internet browsers give users the ability to find websites all over the world and on almost any topic in seconds. These two trends together speak to many areas of society and how the world has changed in a very short time. Consider the fact, for example, that a business can now hold a virtual meeting with attendees from around the globe, without the need to actually have the employees leave their offices. Further, a student in any school can now visit a school library without leaving his own room and complete research online without ever visiting the school. Today’s “cyber world” gives everyone the power to have instant knowledge, no matter where they are and no matter what the time.

The third element is the ability of the internet user to remain anonymous. Users of the world wide web can obtain data, surf sites, travel to locations (digitally) and communicate with others without ever actually seeing or meeting another person. Also, many “communities” online allow their visitors to create, through screen names and online personalities, a different persona online. This point is made clearly in the Encyclopedia of E-Commerce article: “Cyberculture: Society, Culture and the Internet (2011):

Individuals routinely create screen names and, in some cases, online personalities that may or may not diverge from the ones they project in the

physical world. Again this feature could be either a blessing or a curse. On the one hand the anonymity offers space for individuals who may feel ostracized or isolated to access information and take part in communities that may be practically off limits in the physical world. On the other hand, critics note that the anonymity simply fosters a culture of mischief in which individuals may indulge in social behaviors online that are unacceptable in the ordinary world, perhaps even illegal or subversive (para.1).

Many hundreds of millions of people utilize the internet and they have come to expect a large degree of freedom in doing so. Short of blatantly illegal activity, unfettered online freedom is the standard. Of course, with freedom comes some responsibility. Suffice to say the element of anonymity afforded to users is a driving force behind the allure of the internet and its many capabilities.

As the internet has continued to adapt to new technologies, it has affected our lives in many ways. One of the largest activities on the internet is a web based group or system of technologies referred to collectively as Social Media. In a paper written for the Summit Law Group titled the “Legal Ramifications of the Social Media Explosion, An Employers Guide”, writers Anger and D’Almeida-Mabee (2010) offer a definition of social media as “encompassing web-based technology that facilitates social networking and communication. It is instantaneous and unedited. Social media includes blogging, micro-blogging (Twitter), audio-visual networking (YouTube), and social networking (Facebook, MySpace)” (p. 1). Social Networking is a tool used by many on the internet to communicate with people they choose to “friend.” It has in some ways replaced social gatherings of a physical type with that of a digital type. How large is this phenomena? In a survey of page views, the web site Pingdom.com reports that as of January 5, 2010:

Facebook:	has 260 billion page views per month.
MySpace:	has 24 billion page views per month.
Twitter:	has 4.4 billion page views per month.

Facebook.com (2011) reports that it currently has five hundred million users with fifty percent of those users logging onto Facebook every day. Additionally, the average user has one hundred and thirty friends – or people that are given access to all of the user’s posted information. Of those users, at least two hundred million users access their Facebook accounts via mobile devices.

Clearly, users of the internet are accessing information and exchanging information at a higher rate every day. Social media sites exist primarily because they give others the ability to communicate, browse and view information without physical contact and with relative ease. One might expect that users with the requisite knowledge to operate within this cyber world would be able to do so with full knowledge or consent that personal information was being viewed, not just by “friends,” but also by employers, for example. However, Susannah Fox (2008), author of “Privacy Implications of Fast, Mobile Internet Access,” has found this not to be the case:

Our research finds that many Americans are jumping into the participatory Web without considering all the implications. If nothing really bad has happened to someone, they tend to neither worry about their personal information nor to take steps to limit the amount of information that can be found about them online (para. 4).

If people in the general public are posting information that is inappropriate or illegal on social media sites, are personnel employed in law enforcement also participating in a fashion that reflects poorly on their department? The answer is that unfortunately police departments are finding that with the explosive growth of cyberculture, police departments are not immune from negative side effects. According to Lou Reiter (2011), the author of a paper written for the Risk Management Institute, he has found that public safety agencies are repeatedly finding disturbing items on social networks sites of both employment candidates and agency employees. He goes on to state that photographs of gun play; sexual misconduct; derogatory comments about race, ethnicity, religion and sexual preference; bragging about uses of force and even graphic photographs of evidence and crime scenes have been found. For example, in 2009, an Indiana State Trooper posted a photograph on his Facebook page that showed him with a gun pointed to his head and other photographs with lewd statements along with an abundance of alcoholic beverage (Segall, 2009). The photographs resulted in an internal affairs investigation and press coverage that included postings of the photos in the Indianapolis local press. And in what has become an infamous case, detailed by author Jim Dwyer in the New York Times (2009), Officer Vaughan Ettienne testified at a trial on a case where he had arrested a subject for carrying a loaded gun. During the trial the defense attorney produced evidence from Officer Ettienne's MySpace and Facebook pages. The officer had posted statements about inappropriate uses of force and using violent movies as training for his work. Based on this information, and information about the officer's alleged steroid use, the jury convicted the subject only of a simple misdemeanor -disregarding the most serious charges in the case. At the end of the trial, the officer stated: "I feel it's partially my fault. It paints a picture of a person who could be overly aggressive. You put that together, it's reasonable doubt in anybody's mind" (para. 3-18).

If these stories aren't enough to make law enforcement leaders wary of the internet uses of their subordinates, another problem also exists. According to the authors Jones and Behling (2010), in their work titled "Uncharted Waters: Using Social Networks in the Hiring Process," a person must also be careful of what others post about them because sites allow others to "tag" a friend by attaching a photo or video to their profile with an attached name thereby "tagging" them with embarrassing or inappropriate content.

It is important to remember that many applicants and even current members of law enforcement agencies have not known a time without the internet. They have grown up with access to the World Wide Web and all its power. Human Rights Attorney Donna Seale (2009) notes that "my experience being involved in social networking sites so far is that younger users of these sites seem less inclined to compartmentalize their lives into 'public' or 'private,' 'online' or 'offline.' They just are because they've grown up with this stuff. With that comes postings which might seem, to those who have no involvement in using social networking sites, extraordinary or inappropriate" (p. 3).

And, Lynn Lieber (2010), in an article published in *Employee Relations Today*, states that:

Employees are astonishingly unaware that their social-networking activities are public – that *nothing* on the internet is private. Employees do not realize that even if their Facebook page profile is set to “private,” it can be accessed by employers, potential employers, co-workers, supervisors, the government, or governmental administrative agencies (p. 84).

She goes on to describe how new workplace terminology is being born that is specifically related to the process of losing one’s job based on internet information - referring to being fired based on Facebook profile as being “Facebook fired” or if it is related to a Twitter comment it is called being “twerminated” (pp. 84-85).

Methods

The intent of this research was to examine how municipal police agencies in the State of Florida utilize data from the internet to screen job applicants and current employees. With dramatic societal and technological changes occurring at a breakneck pace, it is imperative that agencies keep up with changes in law, policy and procedure. New hires and current employees are participating in social networking both on and off duty. The impact of this participation may ultimately affect either their suitability for employment or their ability to work effectively as police department employees.

This research was accomplished by utilizing an online survey instrument (see appendix A) distributed by email to 293 municipal police agencies in Florida. This sampling represents all municipal agencies in the state, regardless of size or population served. The survey contained twenty-one questions and was directed to the office of the Chief of Police in each agency. The number of agencies queried, as well as the diversity of size and police mission, provided for a large distribution.

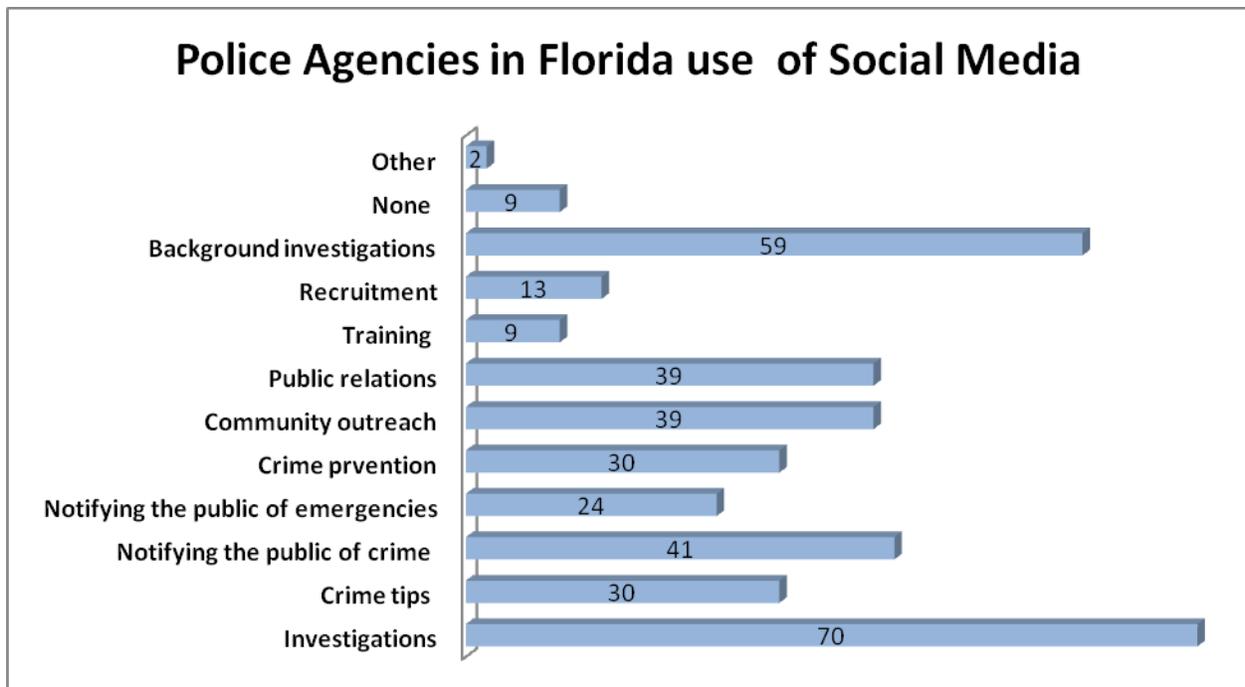
The survey did not request responder personal identification. The survey instrument did request agency name be provided for tracking purposes. Responders were assured their agency data would remain anonymous. This anonymity provided each respondent the ability to be forthright and secure in answering each question. The strength of this approach allows for agencies to comfortably provide feedback as to negative impacts they have experienced. However, agencies that have not yet experienced a negative impact may have been less prone to participate in this survey since they have not identified Social Media and Social Networking as a departmental problem at their particular agency. Additionally, since the survey was directed to each agency’s chief executive, they may have been less prone to participate due to a lack of knowledge of the survey process and apathy as to perceived need for results.

Results

Two hundred and ninety-three municipal police agencies in Florida were surveyed by email to the Chief Executive of each agency. Forty-six agencies responded, representing a 15 % response rate to the survey. Of the agencies that

responded, twenty-five were agencies of less than 50 sworn officers; seven were agencies of between 50-100 sworn officers and fourteen were agencies of over 100 officers. The populations served by the responding agencies were diverse. Nineteen (19) of the responding agencies serve a population of ten thousand or less; thirteen (13) of the responding agencies serve a population of fifty thousand or less; nine (9) of the responding agencies serve a population of one-hundred thousand or less and four (4) agencies serve a population of over one-hundred thousand people. (One surveyed agency failed to provide their data.)

Agencies were asked if they currently use social media at their agency and if so, for what purpose. Responses showed a high percentage of municipal agencies in Florida currently utilize social media for criminal investigative purposes. A large percentage of agencies also utilize social media for background investigations (see chart below).



Sixty-two percent (62 %) of the responding agencies do not maintain a social media site for their agency. Thirty-one percent (31%) of responding agencies maintain an agency “Facebook” page. Thirteen percent (13%) maintain sites of other types (Youtube, MySpace etc...).

Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the agencies surveyed do not have a written policy that applies to employee use of social media. Conversely, forty-two percent (42%) of those surveyed do currently have a policy. Of those agencies who responded that they do have a Social Media policy, ninety-five percent (95%) of those policies cover on-duty use of social media and eighty-four percent (84%) cover off duty use of social media in some fashion.

When asked if the agencies surveyed had experienced a negative impact based on current employee use of Social Media/Networking sites, eighty-three percent (83%)

responded that they have not experienced a negative impact to this date. Fifteen percent (15%) of the agencies surveyed have experienced a negative impact related to current employees social media use in the last year. Two percent (2%) have experienced a negative impact within the last two years.

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the agencies polled have not taken disciplinary action against a current employee for social networking/media activities to date. However, eleven percent (11%) of the agencies surveyed have taken disciplinary action within the last year for employee activities associated with social networking. Two percent (2%) have taken action within the last two years.

When asked if agencies screen or review the social networking sites of current employees, thirty percent (30%) expressed that they did not do any screening. Forty-six percent (46%) stated that they did so only if a complaint was received. Conversely, twenty-two percent (22%) currently screen their employees randomly and two percent (2%) screen their current employee sites on a regular schedule. Agencies were asked if they had conducted training on social networking issues related to police department employee behavior online. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the agencies polled stated they had done some form of training. Fifty-two percent (52%) of the agencies had done no training for their employees.

Agencies were asked if they screened the social networking activities of police department job applicants, during the background process. Fifty-two percent (52%) of the agencies stated they did screen social networking sites of prospective employees. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the agencies stated they do no screening of job applicants' social networking activities. Seventy-two percent (72%) of the agencies do not require job applicants to sign a waiver prior to reviewing social networking sites. Twenty-eight (28%) of the agencies surveyed currently have a waiver form signed during the background screening process. Eighty-five percent (85%) of the agencies polled do not print and retain copies of the applicant's site pages that they review. Also, eighty-five percent (85%) of agencies polled use some form of online resource to confirm the accuracy of information provided by applicants.

When asked if agencies currently use content found on applicants' social networking sites to influence a hiring decision, fifty-two percent (52%) replied that they do not. Forty-eight percent (48%) replied that they do use social networking activities or content to influence a hiring decision.

When asked if agencies currently have a written standard for review of social networking sites, only seven percent (7%) stated that they did have a policy. Fifty percent (50%) stated they have no policy, twenty-six percent (26%) stated they were considering one and seventeen percent (17%) said they were currently developing a policy.

Lastly, agencies were asked if they had passed over a job applicant because of their social networking activities. Eighty-nine percent (89%) stated they had not passed over a candidate due to content on a social networking site. Eleven percent (11%) stated that they had passed over a job applicant based on their social networking activities. Of those who stated they had passed a candidate over, seventy-five percent (75%) had done so in the last year.

Discussion

The survey used in this research received a response rate of only fifteen percent. The anticipated response rate was higher considering the current impact of Social Media questions in the law enforcement community. In retrospect, sending this email survey to Chiefs of Police may not have been the most appropriate method to ensure a high rate of return. Many Chiefs of Police are inundated with email activity and have a limited time resource to attend to out of agency research. If a more appropriate person at each agency could have been identified that had involvement in the policy and training questions raised by this survey, a higher response rate could possibly have been generated. Additionally, since eighty-three percent (83%) of the agencies polled have experienced no negative impact from social media use by their employees to date, many agencies that did not respond may not have perceived this issue to be a pressing need. It should also be noted that the survey instrument in this research did not compare the responses of agencies relative to department size. Therefore, it is difficult to discern whether larger agencies differ from smaller agencies in their treatment of social media policy. This is an area of social media policy development that should be researched in the future.

Based on the survey results, it is clear that municipal law enforcement agencies in Florida are finding value in utilizing social media and networking sites for a wide range of purposes at this time. The two strongest responses in this area were in assisting in criminal investigations and assisting in background investigations – with seventy, and fifty-nine percent response rates in these areas respectively. However, a surprisingly large number of agencies are also utilizing social media to inform the public about crime and emergencies in their areas. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the agencies who responded to the survey currently have a police department “Facebook” page or site. Interestingly, less than half of the agencies (42%) surveyed have a written policy that pertains to the use of social networking sites by employees. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the agencies surveyed have no written policy that pertains to use of social networking sites by current employees. Consequently, how do agencies handle issues that arise out of the activities of employees on social media sites? Based on this survey, fifty-two percent (52%) of the agencies polled have conducted no training of their employees related to employee behaviors online. Do agencies want their officers to be using devices, cell phones and even department computer systems, to socially network while on duty? Shouldn't departments develop reasonable policies to define and govern what is expected of employees about online behaviors? And shouldn't agencies then train their employees about these policies? Since only a small percentage of agencies have seen a negative impact or have had to take disciplinary action based on an online behavior of an employee, it appears that Florida municipal police agencies have not yet concluded that training their personnel in this area is a priority.

Yet another question is how and to what extent do agencies govern the off-duty activity of agency employees. It is off-duty social media use that may present police agencies the more difficult policy decision. When off-duty behaviors become detrimental to the mission of the police department, agencies are placed in a position of mandating these behaviors. Actions that reveal sensitive police related information, are sexually

explicit, contain defamatory material, contain offensive remarks about certain classes of individuals and conduct that would cause the employee to be impeached as a witness, are all conduct of which agencies must be cognizant. These areas are very sensitive and can implicate constitutional protections under certain circumstances. However, these actions also have a more explosive potential to damage an agency and an employee's ability to work within that agency. Of those agencies polled in this research that do have a social media policy, eighty-four percent (84%) of those policies also apply to off-duty use, seventy-four percent (74%) applied to images gained during their employ at the agency and seventy-nine percent (79%) applied to using or mis-using the department uniform, logo or badge.

This survey shows that thirty percent (30%) of the agencies polled do not screen the personal social media sites of current employee's public social media sites at all. Forty-six percent (46%) screen only if a complaint is received. This means that fully seventy-six percent (76%) of the agencies in the survey currently leave employee personal social media use without departmental review. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the agencies randomly screen employee social media use and two percent (2%) screen their employees on a defined schedule. Only nine percent (9%) of the agencies polled stated that their agency had conducted a review of agency wide social media use by employees. It is important to note that the social networking activities of employees are occurring in the public and are not protected by privacy issues. The vast majority of the sites and activities being referred to in this research are open to the public. These activities are widespread and they reach a very large number of people. They have the potential to impact an employee's ability to perform their job and yet agencies are not aware of the content and activities that are occurring online. Admittedly, agencies currently have policies in place that may be applicable to some online activities. These policies could include internet use (policy written before social networking sites became popular), attention to duty, and conduct unbecoming. However, due to the constant change and growth of these technologies, there is now clearly a need for a specific policy to address social media.

This research indicates that fifty-two percent (52%) of the agencies polled are having police job applicants supply their social networking sites during the background investigation phase. However, only twenty-eight percent (28%) of those polled require applicants to sign a written waiver/consent form during this process. Also, eighty-five percent (85%) of the agencies polled do not retain a printed copy of an applicant's reviewed sites. This information is most disconcerting when you look at the fact that forty-eight percent (48%) of those agencies polled stated that they currently use the content on the sites reviewed to influence a hiring decision. Only seven percent (7%) of the agencies polled currently have a written standard or policy for reviewing social media sites of job applicants. (Note: forty-three percent are either considering or working on a policy at this time). Since agencies reviewing social media are being exposed to information that may provide a more personal view of an applicant's lifestyle, protections need to be put in place to provide a legal, equitable and transparent hiring process. These protections would protect the agency, provide an accurate picture of an applicant's background, and limit possible liability in the future.

In response to changes in our society involving internet use and social media growth, it appears logical that agencies are going to be expected to cybervett new

employees and screen current employee's social media use to some degree. Law enforcement is not immune to societal changes and must recruit new members from a talent base that, as demonstrated above, has evolved. We must, therefore, take the initiative to train our current members on the pitfalls of internet privacy – or lack thereof. We must make clear to members that photos, statements and videos of activity in their personal life have a likelihood of showing up at their next trial, as attorney's attempt to show officer bias. And lastly, we must develop standards so that our decisions and actions are sufficiently founded to withstand legal review in this relatively new area of law. Author Edward Appel (2011) stated this most clearly in his book on internet searching: "Internet Searches for Vetting, Investigations, and Open Source Intelligence," when he said:

"While it is good to know that the agencies with the highest stakes (i.e. those whose employees hold the highest clearances, carry weapons on duty, and must keep secrets) are beginning to address Internet vetting, it is clear that the process is not uniform or well developed" (p. 124).

Our guidelines, as always, need to carry a balance between our agencies' diligence in screening proper employees for the job, screening current employees, and consideration for the rights and freedoms of these same individuals. This will ensure trustworthy employees are hired and retained and that they are behaving in a manner that reflects well on their agency and engenders trust from the community they serve.

Since our ultimate goal is to provide police service to our community in a manner that is beyond reproach, we must ask ourselves what are the public's expectations about our review of current employees and police applicants. Does the public expect that police agencies review the background and activity of our employees when the information is so easily obtained? If the answer to this question is "yes," then agencies should act accordingly.

Recommendations

After reviewing the data provided in this research, some recommendations can be made that should be considered by municipal police agencies in Florida:

- Agencies should adopt a "Social Media" policy. Model policies are available through several outlets including the International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- Agencies should train their employees on the policy and their department's expectations about employee behaviors online.
- Any policy adopted should address both on and off-duty conduct of department employees.
- Agencies should periodically re-evaluate the behaviors of their current employees by screening public social media activity of their members.
- Agencies should include in their policy, a written standard for the screening of job applicants that includes at a minimum:

- a) A written standard.
- b) A search methodology.
- c) Adjudication methods.
- d) Notice to applicants.
- e) Written consent of applicants.
- f) Opportunity to correct findings.
- g) Retention of information.

Lieutenant Mike Darroch has worked at the Pinellas Park Police Department for over 28 years. He started as a Patrol Officer in 1983. He was transferred to the Investigations Section in 1985 and served as a Detective until 1989, when he rotated back to Patrol. He then served as a Field Training Officer until 1994, when he was promoted to Patrol Sergeant. He then worked as a shift supervisor until 1996, when he was transferred back into the Investigations Section as the Sections Supervisor. In 2001, he transferred back to Patrol and served again as a patrol shift supervisor until 2005, when he was promoted to Lieutenant. He currently commands both Dayshift and Evening Shift patrol functions at the Pinellas Park Police Department.

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Community outreach		18	39%
Public relations		18	39%
Training		4	9%
Recruitment		6	13%
Background investigations		27	59%
None of the above		4	9%
Other, please specify VIEW		1	2%
Total Respondents		46	

5. Does your agency maintain a department social media website?

		Response Total	Response Percent
No		28	62%
Yes, Facebook		14	31%
Yes, MySpace		1	2%
Yes, YouTube		1	2%
Other, please specify VIEW		4	9%
Total Respondents		45	
(skipped this question)			1

6. Does your agency have a social media/networking written policy that applies to employee use?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		19	42%
No		26	58%
Total Respondents		45	
(skipped this question)			1

7. If yes, does your written policy apply to:

		Response Total	Response Percent
On-duty use		18	95%
Off-duty use		16	84%
Use of images gained during employment		14	74%
Use of department uniform/logo/badge, etc.		15	79%
Total Respondents		19	
(skipped this question)			27

8. Has your department experienced a negative impact related to current employee use of social networking sites?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes, in the last year		7	15%
Yes, in the last 2 years		1	2%
Yes, in the last 3 years		0	0%
No negative impact to date		38	83%
Total Respondents		46	

9. Has your department taken disciplinary action against current employees for activities on social networking sites?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes, in the last year		5	11%
Yes, in the last 2 years		1	2%
Yes, in the last 3 years		0	0%
No disciplinary action to date		39	87%
Total Respondents		45	
(skipped this question)			1

10. Does your department screen current employees' social networking sites?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Not at all		14	30%
Only if a complaint is received		21	46%
Randomly		10	22%
On a regular schedule		1	2%
Total Respondents		46	

11. Has your department conducted a review of current employee social networking sites (in the public)?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		4	9%
No		41	91%
Total Respondents		45	
(skipped this question)			1

12. Has your department conducted training on social networking and issues related to police employment and behavior online?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		22	48%
No		24	52%
Total Respondents		46	

13. Does your department screen job applicants by asking them to provide access to the social networking sites during the background investigation process?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		24	52%
No		22	48%
Total Respondents		46	

14. Does your department routinely gain access to applicants' social networking sites and review the content?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		21	47%
No		24	53%
Total Respondents		45	
(skipped this question)			1

15. Does your department require applicants to sign a waiver/consent form prior to review of applicants' social networking sites?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		12	28%
No		31	72%
Total Respondents		43	
(skipped this question)			3

16. Does your department print and retain copies of applicants' sites reviewed?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		7	15%
No		39	85%
Total Respondents		46	

17. Does your department perform a check of online resources to confirm the accuracy of information provided by applicants?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		32	73%
No		12	27%
Total Respondents		44	
(skipped this question)			2

18. Do you currently use the content found on a social networking site to influence in a hiring decision?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		22	48%
No		24	52%
Total Respondents		46	

19. Does your department have a written standard for review of social networking sites?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		3	7%
No		23	50%
Considering		12	26%
Currently working on developing one		8	17%
Total Respondents		46	

20. Has your department passed over a candidate for employment because of their social networking content?

		Response Total	Response Percent
Yes		5	11%
No		41	89%
Total Respondents		46	

21. If you answered yes to # 19, please indicate when this occurred?

		Response Total	Response Percent
In the last year		6	75%
In the last 2 years		1	12%
In the last 3 years		1	12%
Total Respondents		8	
(skipped this question)			38