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**AUGUSTA WATER  
OPERATING PROCEDURES AND POLICY MANUAL**

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Approved By: Board of Directors  
Effective Date: September 20, 2021

Communications  
Policy No. 6.1  
Page 1 of 2

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**Communication Guidelines for Employees**

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**1.0 Definitions**

Social Media Platforms – Interactive technology sites allowing the creation or sharing of ideas, interests, and other forms of expression by virtual networks and communities, including but not limited to: Twitter, Google (social networking), Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, and Snapchat.

Augusta Water Communication Systems – Include but not limited to: email, phones, text, and phone/tablet apps.

**2.0 Overview**

Augusta Water respects the right of its employees to speak on matters of public concern.

Augusta Water employees are encouraged to communicate (including on social media) responsibly and respectfully, and in a manner that does not reflect poorly on their ability to perform their job duties.

Communications must be grammatically correct and must not contain any misspelled words.

Employees should not share or use Augusta Water confidential information, including copyrighted information, customer personal information, or proprietary information of an Augusta Water contractor, except as authorized or needed for official Augusta Water business.

Communications relating to Augusta Water business must be kept in accordance with Augusta Water FOIA and records retention guidelines.

Employees are prohibited from using their Augusta Water email address to register on social media platforms, websites, and other online tools utilized for personal use. Employees are prohibited from using Augusta Water devices for personal social media use.

Communications utilizing Augusta Water communication systems are not private and are subject to review at any time. Misuse of Augusta Water communication systems or inappropriate email content may subject the person responsible to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**3.0 Representation**

Employees may not represent themselves as a spokesperson for Augusta Water unless it is part of their assigned job duties. Representation on social media platforms must be authorized by the Director of HR or their designee.

**4.0 Be Respectful**

Employees are expected to always be civil and professional in communications. Work related complaints are typically best resolved by speaking with the co-worker or a supervisor, rather than gossiping, emailing or posting complaints on social media.

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Page 2 of 2

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Employees are strongly encouraged to avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as defamatory, obscene, threatening or intimidating; that disparage others; or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include emails or posts without factual support intended to intentionally harm someone's reputation or that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, religion, or any other status protected by state or federal law or Augusta Water policy.