



Summary of State Social Media Legislation

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Summary of State Social Media Legislation

Many states have passed into law, or have introduced legislation, regarding access to personal social media and other personal Internet accounts. For the most up-to-date list of recent legislative action, and the disposition of that action, visit the National Conference of State Legislatures at NCSL.org.

The statues, in varying degrees, prohibit employers (and in some instances, colleges and universities) from:

- Requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant (or student in the case of colleges and universities) provide access to their personal social media accounts
- Requesting or requiring an employee or applicant (or student) open a personal social media account in the employer's presence
- Adding an employer to the employee or applicant's (or student's) list of friends or contacts
- Altering the employee or applicant's (or student's) privacy settings

State	Effective Date	Prohibits/Allows	Remedies
Arkansas	04/22/13	Prohibits: employer from requiring or requesting that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Add employer or a third party to contact list Change privacy settings so that a third party can view Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Allows: Viewing of publicly available information Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices	Civil penalties or criminal misdemeanor fines of between \$10.00 and \$100 per violation

California	01/01/14	Prohibits: employer from requiring or requesting that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Access account in the presence of the employer - Disclose account content except what is allowed below Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	Potential Private Attorney General Act (PAGA) claims. PAGA allows employees to pursue civil penalties on behalf of the State of CA Labor and Workforce Development Agency
		Allows: - Mandatory login turnover to access employer-owned device - Reasonable-belief investigation into employee misconduct	
Colorado	05/11/13	 Prohibits: employer from requiring or requesting that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Access account in the presence of the employer Add employer or a third party to contact list Change privacy settings so that a third party can view 	Fines up to \$1,000 for the first violation and up to \$5,000 for each subsequent violation.
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	
		Allows: - Mandatory turnover of non-personal account login - Investigations of personal accounts in situations involving o Employee theft	

		 Violation of employer policies Violations of securities and financial laws/regulations 	
Connecticut	06/06/16	Prohibits: employer from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Access account in the presence of the employer - Invite or accept an invite from the employer to join a group affiliated with any personal account of either party Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Allows: - Monitoring, reviewing, or accessing electronic data in a device paid for in whole, or in part, by the employer - Investigations of personal accounts in situations involving Ocompliance with state or federal law Owork-related employee misconduct based on specific information about activity on the owner's personal account Other receipt of information about an unauthorized transfer of company information to the owner's	If an employer does retaliate against an employee, they may be entitled to up to \$500 for the first violation and \$1,000 for each subsequent violation. They may also give the employee all appropriate relief including reinstatement, back pay, reestablishment of benefits, or any other remedies the commissioner may deem appropriate. If an employer refuses to hire an applicant, they may be entitles up to \$25 for the first violation and \$500 for each subsequent violation
Delaware	08/07/15	personal accounts Prohibits: employer from requesting or requiring that an	Unclear
Delaware	00/0//13	employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Access account in the presence of the employer - Use social media as a condition of employment - Accept an invite from the employer to join a group affiliated with any personal account or add employer or a third party to contact list	Officical

		- Change privacy settings so that a third party can view	
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	
		Allows: - Investigations of personal accounts in situations involving - Compliance with state or federal law - Work-related employee misconduct based on specific information about activity on the owner's personal account - Monitoring, reviewing, accessing, or blocking data stored on an employer's network or devices supplied or paid by the employer. - Viewing of publicly available information - Complying with the duty to screen applicant/employees that is established under federal or state law or during a	
		law enforcement application or conduct investigation	
Hawaii	06/10/21	 Prohibits: employer from requesting, coercing, or requiring that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Disclose the content of the account unless completely voluntary upon an employer request Change privacy settings so that a third party can view Access account in the presence of the employer Turn over an unlocked personal device for purposes of gaining access to protected personal accounts Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. 	The attorney general can bring a civil action against a violating employer. Penalties may include: - Injunctions - Up to \$1,000 per violation, not exceeding \$100,000 for all violations caused by the same event - Actual and general damages - Costs and reasonable attorney fees
		Allows: - Viewing of publicly available information - Complying with the duty to screen applicant/employees	
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		that is established under federal or state law or during a	
		law enforcement application or conduct investigation	
		performed by a law enforcement agency.	
		- Creating policy pertaining to the use of employer supplied	
		devices	
		- Investigations of personal accounts in situations involving	
		 Compliance with state or federal law 	
		 Work-related employee misconduct based on 	
		specific information about activity on the owner's	
		personal account	
		 Threats to safety including, violence in the 	
		workplace, threats to employer information or	
		systems, and/or threats to employer property	
<u>Illinois</u>	01/01/17	Prohibits: employer from requesting or requiring that an	Complaints to the Department
	, ,	employee or applicant	of Labor, employee private
		- Turnover personal account login information	actions for damages. For
		- Provide employer access	willful violations: damages,
		- Add employer or a third party to contact list	attorneys' fees, \$200 penalty
		That employer of a time party to contact not	accorneys rees, \$200 penarcy
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing	
		such requests.	
		Such requests.	
		Allows:	
		- Viewing of publicly available information	
		- Lawful workplace-device and internet use policies	
		Network and email monitoring	
		- Compliance with state and federal laws when applicable	
		- Prohibiting the use of a personal account for business	
		purposes	
		- Prohibiting the use of a personal account during business	
		hours, while on property, or while using employer	
		supplied resources	
		- Request of account information for investigations	
		regarding	
		 Allegations of unauthorized transfers of employer 	
		information to a personal account	
		_	@2000 Michigan Chata University, bulg many a

		 Violation of state or federal law Threats to safety including, violence in the workplace, threats to employer information or systems, and/or threats to employer property 	
Louisiana	05/22/14	 Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Allows: Employer to requesting or requiring an employee or applicant for employment to disclose any username, password, or other authentication information to the employer to gain access to or operate any of the following: 	Unclear

- Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices
- Disciplining or discharging an employee for transferring the employer's proprietary or confidential information or financial data to an employee's personal online account without the employer's authorization.
- Investigating or requiring an employee or applicant to cooperate in an investigation in any of the following circumstances:
 - If there is specific information about activity on the employee's personal online account, for the purpose of ensuring compliance with applicable laws, regulatory requirements, or prohibitions against work-related employee misconduct.
 - If the employer has specific information about an unauthorized transfer of the employer's proprietary information, confidential information, or financial data to an employee's or applicant's personal online account.
 - o Investigating or requiring an employee or applicant to cooperate in an investigation as specified in this Subsection, including requiring the employee or applicant to share the content that has been reported in order to make a factual determination, without obtaining the username and password to the employee's or applicant's personal online account.
 - o Restricting or prohibiting an employee's or

		applicant's access to certain websites while using an electronic communications device paid for or supplied in whole or in part by the employer or while using an employer's network or resources, in accordance with state and federal law.	
Maine	10/15/15	 Prohibits: employers from requiring that or coercing an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Access account in the presence of the employer Disclose any information on the personal account Add employer or a third party to contact list Change privacy settings so that a third party can view Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Viewing of publicly available information Duty to screen or supervise under obligation of state or federal law Investigations of employee misconduct or a workplace-related violation of laws or rules Workplace policies to be created governing the use of the employer's equipment 	If not less than \$100 for the first violation, not less than \$250 for the second, and not less than \$500 for each subsequent violation

Maryland	09/01/12	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Grant employer access	Potential for injunctive relief, damages, or other relief
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	
		Allows:	
		 Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices 	
		 Employers may investigate accounts that are used for business purposes 	
Michigan	12/28/12	Prohibits: employer from requiring or requesting that an employee or applicant - Request access to, or observation of, login information for "personal internet accounts"	Criminal misdemeanor or civil actions up to \$1,000 plus attorneys' fees
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	
		Allows: - Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices	

 Discipline or discharge an employee for transferring the employer's proprietary or confidential information or financial data to an employee's personal internet account without authorization Conduct an investigation in specific circumstances Restrict or prohibit an employee's access to certain websites while using an electronic communications device paid for, in whole or in part, by the employer or while using an employer's network or resources 	

Montana	04/23/15	 Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Access account in the presence of the employer Divulge information in a social media account as a condition of employment Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing 	Damages are limited to \$500 or actual damages up to \$7,000
		 such requests. Allows: Request of login information regarding work-related misconduct or criminal defamation Investigation if employer has specific information about a transfer of employer data to a personal account Request of login information to ensure compliance with federal laws or regulatory requirements Request of information from a personal account if directly involved in an investigation Policies to be made about use of social media accounts on employer supplied devices and/networks 	

Nebraska	04/19/16	Duckihitad, analogous from requesting or requiring that are	Civil action lawsuit is filed at the
INCULASKA	04/19/10	Prohibited: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant	District Court level in the county
		- Turnover personal account login information	in which the violation occurred.
		- Access account in the presence of the employer	The court will try this case as a
		- Add employer or a third party to contact list	normal civil action and will
		- Add employer of a till d party to contact list	address the appropriate
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing	punishment.
		, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
		such requests.	
		Allows:	
		 Create and maintain lawful workplace policies 	
		regarding the use of employer provided technology	
		 Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and 	
		devices	
		- Restrict or limit employee access to certain websites	
		while using an employer device or network	
		 Monitor, review, access, or block electronic data 	
		stored on an employer device or network	
		 Viewing of publicly available information 	
		- Conduct investigations regarding:	
		 Potentially wrongful activity taking place on the 	
		personal internet account for the purpose of	
		compliance with applicable laws and	
		regulations against employee misconduct	
		 An unauthorized transfer of employer data to 	
		the personal internet account without	
		permission	
		- Taking adverse action for the unauthorized transfer	
		of employer data	
		- Comply with federal and state requirements to screen	
		employees of applicants	
		- Comply with law enforcement investigations	
		conducted by a law enforcement agency	

<u>Nevada</u>	10/01/13	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information	Possible complaints with Nevada Human Rights Commission
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	
		Allows:	
		 Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices 	
		- Monitoring for self-regulatory companies	
<u>New</u> <u>Hampshire</u>	09/30/14	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant	Unsure
		Turnover personal account login informationAdd employer or a third party to contact list	
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	
		Allows:	
		 Create and enforce lawful workplace policies governing the use of employer technology Monitor usage of employer devices and networks 	
		- Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices	
		Viewing of publicly available informationConducting investigations regarding:	
		 Compliance with applicable laws and regulations against work-related employee misconduct regarding a personal internet account 	
		 An unauthorized transfer of employer information to a personal account 	

New Jersey	12/01/13	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an	Civil penalties up to \$1,000
		employee or applicant	for first violation and \$2,500
		- Turnover personal account login information	for each subsequent violation
		- Waive protected rights	
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing	
		such requests.	
		Allows:	
		- Employer policies for use of employer devices and	
		accounts	
		 Investigating account activity related to work 	
		misconduct or theft of employer information	
		- Viewing of publicly available information	,
New Mexico	06/14/13	Prohibits: Employer from requesting or requiring that	Unclear
		applicants (does not apply to employees)	
		- Turnover personal account login information	
		- Grant other ways to access account	
		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing	
		such requests.	
		Allows:	
		- Workplace policies regarding device and network use	
		- Monitoring of equipment and network without	
		mandatory account access	
		- Viewing of publicly available information	

<u>Oklahoma</u>	11/01/14	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Access account in the presence of the employer Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	An employee or prospective employee can file a civil action against the employer. It needs to be filed within 6 months of the event occurring. The only recoverable damages are \$500 per violation.
		 Allows: Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices Viewing personal accounts that have been used on the employer's network or devices Investigations regarding:	
<u>Oregon</u>	01/01/14	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Authorize the employer to advertise on the personal account - Access account in the presence of the employer - Add employer or a third party to contact list	Applicants, employees, or the Attorney General may sue for: - \$200 penalty - Punitive damages

		Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Allows: - Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices - Investigations regarding the receipt of work-related misconduct	 Injunctions Attorneys' fees Reinstatement Back pay "Other appropriate relief"
Rhode Isla	and 06/30/14	Prohibits: employers from requesting, coercing, or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Access account in the presence of the employer - Divulge and personal account information or content - Add employer or a third party to contact list - Change privacy settings so that a third party can view Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Allows: - Compliance with a duty to screen employees/applicants as allowed by federal and state law - Investigations regarding work-related misconduct or violation of applicable laws and regulations	In any civil action the court may award declaratory relief, damages, reasonable attorney's costs, and injunctive relief against any employer, or agent of the employer, who commits a violation
Tennessee	01/01/15	Prohibits: employers from requesting, coercing, or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Add employer or a third party to contact list - Access account in the presence of the employer Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	Can sue for up to \$1,000.00 in damages for each violation, plus reasonable attorney's fees and court costs.
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- Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices
- Disciplining or discharging an employee for transferring employer data to a personal account without permission
- Investigations regarding:
 - Work-relate misconduct or compliance with applicable laws or regulations
 - Unauthorized transfers of employer information to a personal account
- Restricting websites while using an employer provided device or network
- Monitoring, reviewing, accessing, or blocking electronic data stored on an employer supplied device or network
- Complying with a duty to screen employees or applicants as permissible by federal and state law
- Viewing of publicly available information

<u>Utah</u> (05/14/13	Prohibits: employers from requesting or requiring that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	Civil action with a maximum \$500 award
		Allows: - Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices - Discipline for theft of employer information - Information-based investigations and cooperation in such investigations of o employee account activities which raise compliance issues o theft of employer information - Restriction of access on employer's network and devices - Viewing of publicly available information - Legally obligated screening of employees in self-regulatory companies	

Vermont	01/01/18	 Prohibits: employers from requesting, coercing, or requiring that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information or an electronic device to access the social media account Access account in the presence of the employer Divulge any content from a personal account Change privacy settings so that a third party can view Add employer or a third party to their contact list Create an agreement to waive rights listed in this law Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	Compensatory and punitive damages or equitable relief. This includes restraint of prohibited acts, reinstitution of wages and benefits, reinstatement, costs, reasonable attorney fees, and other appropriate relief.
		 Allows: Compliance with employer's legal and regulatory obligations Investigating the allegation of an unauthorized transfer of employer information through a personal social media account Investigating the allegation of unlawful harassment or threats in the workplace, or discriminatory content concerning another employee Law enforcement agencies to gain access to an account for screening purposes Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices 	

Washington	07/28/13	Prohibits: employer from requiring or requesting that an employee or applicant Turnover personal account login information Access account in the presence of the employer Add employer or a third party to contact list Change privacy settings so that a third party can view Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests. Allows: Mandatory access to personal account (may not require turning over of login information) for information-based investigation of personal account activity raising issues of Work-related misconduct Compliance Theft of employer information Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices Enforcement of employer policies that are not in violation of law, regulation or statutes	Employees and applicants may bring a civil action forward. The court may: - Damages - Injunctions - Attorneys' fees - Reinstatement - Back pay - \$500 penalty - "Other appropriate relief"
Wisconsin	02/10/14	Prohibits: employer from requiring or requesting that an employee or applicant - Turnover personal account login information - Other required account access Also prohibits retaliation or rejection of an applicant for refusing such requests.	 Maximum \$1,000 Back pay Reinstatement Front pay

Allows:

- Mandatory access to employer-provided accounts and devices
- Adverse employment action for proprietary information or financial data theft
- Mandatory access to personal account (may not require login information) for information-based investigation of personal account activity raising issues of
 - o work related misconduct
 - o compliance
 - o theft of employer information
- Compliance with legally required screening
- Viewing of publicly available information
- Restriction of access to internet sites using employerowned devices or networks
- Mandatory disclosure of employees' personal email addresses

Note: Some of the laws listed above also apply to educational institutions. Delaware has a social media privacy statute that applies only to academic institutions regarding students. The Wisconsin statue also applies to tenants.

Every effort has been made to ensure that this list is current. Since legislation is pending in a number of states, check online for the most recent legislation. Check either your state's website or the National Conference of State Legislatures.

The information contained in this presentation is for educational purposes and does not constitute legal advice.

Updated by N. Gonzalez, School of Human Resources and Labor Relations, Michigan State University.