

# PUBLICATION

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## Michigan – The Latest State to Ban Employers From Accessing Password Protected Social Media Accounts

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**On Friday, December 28, 2012, Michigan became the fourth state to ban employers from accessing password protected social media accounts.**

Michigan Governor Rick Snyder signed into law [House Bill 5523](#), known as the "Internet Privacy Protection Act." The newly enacted legislation took effect immediately, and prohibits employers and schools from asking applicants, employees, and students for their online passwords or account information used to access private internet and email accounts, including social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

In a press release on December 28, Governor Snyder stated, "Potential employees and students should be judged on their skill and abilities, not private online activity."

Anyone in breach of the law may face jail time and a \$1,000 fine.

Michigan joins California, Maryland, and Illinois as the fourth state to enact legislation addressing online privacy concerns.