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Social Media Policy

*Last updated April 2020*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Policy number | [insert number] | Version | [insert number] |
| Drafted by | [insert name] | Approved by Board on | [insert date] |
| Responsible person | [insert name] | Scheduled review date | [insert date] |

# Introduction

* 1. This Social Media Policy outlines [Organisation]’s expectations of Workers when using social media or making public comments online.
  2. *Optional:* [Organisation] embraces the use of social media for the [promotion, development and delivery of [Organisation]’s goods and services] and is committed to ensuring that social media engagement connected with [Organisation] is lawful, professional and respectful.

# Purpose

* 1. Social media is an important tool that [Organisation] uses to publicise its operations and solicit public support.
  2. The purpose of this policy is to encourage Workers to generate appropriate social media content in connection with [Organisation].
  3. It also aims to set expectations and protocols to ensure that social media posts are consistent with the values of [Organisation] and that posts made through its social media channels do not damage the [Organisation]’s reputation.

# Scope

3.1 This policy applies to:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Employees** | **Directors** | **Officers** | **Contractors** (including employees of contractors) | **Volunteers** | **Members\*** |
| **✓** | **✓** | **✓** | **✓** | **✓** | [**✓**] |

*\* You could also consider if this policy should be extended to members. You may need to have it as a condition of membership that you abide by all organisation policies, including this Policy (and you would need to make it available to them) so that might not be feasible.*

* 1. People covered by this policy will be collectively referred to as **‘Workers’**.
  2. Social media includes, but is not limited to, engagement on:

1. Twitter
2. Facebook
3. Instagram
4. Pinterest
5. Google+
6. WordPress/Blogger
7. YouTube/Vimeo
8. iTunes/Podcasting
9. Snapchat
10. TikTok
11. Reddit
12. LinkedIn
13. Online chat forums/tools (e.g. WhatsApp, Messenger, WeChat, Viber)
14. and any other new forms of social media that may emerge from time to time

# Values

* 1. [Organisation]’s social media use shall be consistent with the following core values:

1. **Integrity:** [Organisation] will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about our own work or the work of other organisations or individuals. In addition, we will post in accordance with the organisation's Copyright and Privacy policies.
2. **Professionalism:** [Organisation]’s social media represents the organisation as a whole and should seek to maintain a professional and uniform tone. Staff and volunteers may, from time to time and as appropriate/authorised, post on behalf of [Organisation] using our online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals.
3. **Information Sharing:** [Organisation] encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to our mission and aims, and of interest to our members.
4. [Add or reference your organisation’s own key values, as appropriate.]

# Policy

* 1. All posts that relate to [Organisation] must meet content guidelines for use of social media. This includes:

1. posts on or connected with [Organisation]’s social media accounts (**Professional Social Media Use**); and
2. posts on Workers’ own social media accounts (**Personal Social Media Use**).
   1. **Professional Social Media Use**

The [CEO/Social Media Manager] may approve an individual to post on [Organisation]’s social media accounts (**Approved Poster**). In determining who should be an Approved Poster, the CEO/Social Media Manager may consider:

* + 1. the extent of control [Organisation] has over the individual
    2. whether the individual has the appropriate communication skills
    3. what understanding the individual has of the risks of social media use
    4. current and former responsibilities and how the individual performed in those roles

Only Approved Posters should have access to social media account passwords and logins.

The CEO must keep records of Approved Posters and review the appropriateness of approvals on an annual basis.

* 1. **Personal Social Media Use**

Subject to this Policy, Workers should seek prior approval from the[CEO/Social Media Manager] before engaging in Personal and/or Professional Social Media Use about or connected with [Organisation], save for promoting or supporting [Organisation]’s activities.

Workers that are not Approved Posters may engage in Personal and/or Professional Social Media Use about or connected to [Organisation] without prior approval from [Organisation], provided that the use complies with the Social Media Policy, Content Guidelines and Procedure.

# Content guidelines

* 1. [Organisation] respects the right of Workers to participate in political, advocacy and community activities.
  2. Workers should be aware that content published online and on social media is, or may become, publicly available, even from personal social media accounts. [Organisation] expects Workers to take reasonable steps to ensure that their social media use and public comments fall within the following parameters.
  3. When engaging in Professional Social Media Use, [Organisation] expects that Workers will:

1. be professional and respectful
2. promote the best interests of [Organisation]
3. not include misleading or deceptive statements or inferences
4. refrain from inappropriate swearing
5. only include intellectual property (such as photos, videos and quotes) that [Organisation] has permission to use or that do not require permission to use
6. comply with [Organisation]’s Privacy Policy.
   1. When engaging in Personal and/or Professional Social Media Use, Workers must also ensure that they [delete or add additional clauses as appropriate]:
7. don't use a work email address to register personal social media accounts
8. refrain from conduct that has the potential to damage [Organisation]’s reputation
9. don't make comments that are unlawful, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to, or about other Workers, clients or stakeholders of [Organisation]
10. don't make comments that are, or could be perceived to:
    1. be made on behalf of [Organisation], rather than an expression of a personal view unless approved or consistent with the Social Media Policy and Procedure
    2. compromise the Worker’s capacity to fulfil duties in an impartial and unbiased manner
11. are mindful that their behaviour is bound by [Organisation]’s [Policies, Procedures and Code of Conduct], even outside work hours (e.g. comments made on social media about a colleague)
12. make clear that any views expressed in Personal Social Media use are their own and not those of [Organisation] (However, this will not necessarily protect them from breaching the Policy).

# Responsibilities

* 1. The [CEO/Board] shall nominate a [Social Media Manager] to co-ordinate [Organisation]’s social media management.
  2. Workers may, from time to time, post or comment on the activities of [Organisation] and where appropriate/authorised, post on behalf of [Organisation] using the organisation’s online social media profiles. Unless a Worker is promoting or supporting the activities of [Organisation], this should only be done only with the express knowledge and authorisation of [Organisation/the Social Media Manager].
  3. The [Social Media Manager] has responsibility for overseeing the organisation’s Social Media Strategy. Their role includes:
     1. Determining which social media platforms are most appropriate for [Organisation] to engage in, and policing those boundaries
     2. Ensuring that all posts are in keeping with [Organisation]’s mission, core values, and policies
     3. Ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken to correct or remove inappropriate posts (including defamatory and/or illegal content), and to minimise the risk of a repeat incident
     4. Ensuring that appropriate and timely action is taken to repair relations with any persons or organisations offended by an inappropriate post
     5. Moderating and monitoring public response to social media, such as blog comments and Facebook replies, to ensure that trolling and spamming does not occur, to remove offensive or inappropriate replies, or caution offensive posters, and to reply to any further requests for information generated by the post topic
     6. Developing a strategy for expanding our social media footprint over time

# Breaches

* 1. If a Worker breaches this Policy or associated Procedures, they may be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including the termination of their engagement.

# Related Documents

[Delete/amend as appropriate:]

* 1. Social Media procedure
  2. [What to do in a Media Crisis](https://communitydirectors.com.au/help-sheets/what-to-do-in-a-media-crisis)
  3. [Media Relations Policy](https://communitydirectors.com.au/policies/media-relations-policy)
  4. [Privacy Policy](https://communitydirectors.com.au/policies/privacy-policy)
  5. [Copyright Policy](https://communitydirectors.com.au/policies/copyright-policy)
  6. IT and email use
  7. [Workplace Health and Safety Policy](https://communitydirectors.com.au/policies/workplace-health-and-safety-policy)
  8. [Confidentiality Policy](https://communitydirectors.com.au/policies/confidentiality-policy)

# Legislation & Industrial Instruments

* Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)
* Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
* Defamation Act (state and territory specific)
* [Insert State and National anti-discrimination legislation]

*This policy & procedure is not intended to override any industrial instrument, contract, award or legislation.*

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Social Media Procedures

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Procedure number | [insert number] | Version | [insert number] |
| Drafted by | [insert name] | Approved on | [insert date] |
| Authorised person | [insert name] | Scheduled review date | [insert date] |

# Procedures

* 1. **Posting to social media**

Before social media posts are made, volunteers and staff should ask themselves the following questions:

* + 1. Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to [Organisation]’s members and stakeholders?
    2. Is the information factual and true? Does it emanate from a reliable source?
    3. Is the information in keeping with the interests of the organisation and in line with the organisation’s mission, work, and core values?
    4. Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project?
    5. Would [Organisation]’s supporters (including donors) be happy to read the post?
    6. If there is a link attached to the post, does the link work, and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source?
    7. If reposting information, is the original poster an individual or organisation that [Organisation] would be happy to associate itself with?
    8. Is the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by [Organisation]? Does it maintain the organisation’s overall tone?

If you are at all uncertain about whether the post is suitable, do not post it until you have discussed it with the **Social Media Manager**. A few moments spent checking can save the organisation big problems in the future. If in doubt, leave it out.

* 1. **Damage limitation**

In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the **Social Media Manager** should be notified as soon as possible, and the following actions should occur:

* + 1. The offending post should be removed.
    2. Where necessary, an apology should be issued, either publicly or to the individual or organisation involved.
    3. The origin of the offending post should be explored, and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

If the mistake seems set to grow, or to cause significant damage to the organisation’s reputation, revert to the [Media Relations Policy](https://communitydirectors.com.au/policies/media-relations-policy) and the Institute of Community Directors Australia (ICDA) help sheet: [What to do in a Media Crisis](https://communitydirectors.com.au/help-sheets/what-to-do-in-a-media-crisis).

* 1. **Moderating social media**

[Organisation] is committed to protecting its reputation and maintaining a safe and friendly environment for its Workers and members.

From time to time social media forums may be hijacked by trolls or spammers or attract people who attack other posters or the organisation aggressively. In order to maintain a pleasant environment for everybody, these posts need to be moderated.

Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts breach the Content Guidelines in the Policy, users may be subject to disciplinary action.

If a post that breaches Content Guidelines appears only once:

1. Remove the post as soon as possible;
2. If possible/appropriate, contact the poster privately to explain why you have removed the post, highlighting [Organisation]’s posting guidelines.

If a poster continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam:

1. Remove the post as soon as possible;
2. Ban or block the poster to prevent them from posting again.

Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort, and only when the poster intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the welfare of other social media users.

Moderation of social media posts, including any decision to block, ban and remove posts, ultimately lies with the **Social Media Manager**, but may, at their discretion, be delegated to responsible staff and volunteers.

Note: if the Social Media Policy has been separated from the Social Media Procedures, copy and paste here the information under ‘9. Related Documents’ and ‘10. Legislation & Industrial Instruments’.

About this document

This policy sample has been developed by the [Institute of Community Directors Australia](https://www.communitydirectors.com.au?utm_campaign=policybank&utm_medium=doc&utm_source=website&utm_content=template) (ICDA) and is free for any not-for-profit organisation to download and use, so long as it is for a non-commercial purpose and that the organisation is not paying a consultant to carry out this work. [Click here](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/general/general_article.jsp?articleId=2153#16) for our full copyright guidelines.

# Important notes

* You can't (or shouldn't) rely on these sample policies and procedures alone. They’re a starting point, but you will have to adapt them to suit your own language and requirements.
* Most samples include both policies and procedures (the policies provide guidance on standards, while procedures give instructions on implementing standards). We recommend adopting policies at a board level, while procedures can be developed/signed off by the organisation's CEO.
* We use the term ‘board’ to cover boards, committees of management, or anybody that has final authority in your organisation. And the term ‘CEO’ extends to executive directors, or your chief administrator. You should change the terms in these policies to match those used in your organisation.

# Other Policies

There are numerous policies available on the Community Directors website: [www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/policybank](https://www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/policybank/?utm_campaign=policybank&utm_medium=doc&utm_source=website&utm_content=template). You can hunt for what you need with our site search function.

# Make a deposit

If you have some great policies that your organisation thinks would be of use to other groups, email them to [service@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:service@ourcommunity.com.au). We'll review them, amend them so that they're applicable to the greatest number of not-for-profits possible, push them into our format, and load them up.

# Join us!

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