

Social Media Policy guidelines

Social media is a vital part of today's communication and is often used by workplaces to bring information to a wide audience. Sometimes boundaries are blurred between the use of social media for work and private use, which is where a Social Media Policy can help. The policy should reflect how staff are expected to engage with social media in the context of work. These guidelines are designed to help small corporations consider the range of issues that may be relevant when drafting a Social Media Policy.

Use the following questions and points to guide the development of a social media policy:

- Who needs to follow this policy?
 - Staff members only or also board members?
- What do you mean by social media and give examples of what you would include
 - E.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp.
- When does the social media policy apply?
 - During work hours and out of work hours?
 - On personal equipment and equipment owned by the PBC?
- How is each social media platform to be used at work?
 - For example, is there a dedicated social media staff member in your PBC or does the PBC encourage all staff members to Tweet?
 - Is there a different policy when they use Facebook?
- Many staff members will have their personal social media profile which will rarely impact on their work-life. However, when writing your policy you should consider how the PBC wants to be represented and if it allows your PBC's name to be used when staff post on their personal social media platforms.
- Personal use of social media
 - is it permitted during working hours?
 - Is it permitted on work equipment?
 - When should personal devices be used?
 - What restrictions do you want to consider?
- Do the employees' duties require them to speak on behalf of the PBC on social media?



- If yes, should any permissions be sought beforehand?
- Do employees need training on social media?
- What should employees do if they are contacted by journalists for comments about the PBC?
- What do you want your employees 'do' or 'not do' when using social media?
 - For example, staff must not post negative or offensive statements about the PBC or its stakeholders?
 - They should make it clear in social media postings if they are speaking as a private person (unless they are posting as part of their job)?
 - They must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as business decisions or money?
 - If they see content on social media that is critical or shows the PBC in a poor light they should refer this to the CEO or XX.
 - They must not post anything that could be considered as discriminating against, or bullying or harassing of, an individual.
 - Most organisations will say that these rules apply as much to staff member's personal social media as they do to the PBC work accounts.
- Employers have the right, in certain circumstances, to monitor their employee's usage of the internet or email at work. Your policy should make this clear if that is done by your PBC.
- Do you use social media as part of your recruitment processes, for example when you use internet searches to look up candidate's history and suitability?
 - If your PBC is doing this, then it should also be reflected in your Privacy Notice.
- Make clear what the consequences of any breach of the policy may be.
- Remember that social media is constantly changing and PBCs should regularly review its social media policy to ensure it is up-to-date.

Here is another more detailed example of a [Social Media Policy template](#) relating to volunteer run sporting organisations. There is also a PBC [Social Media Workbook](#) available.

These guidelines are adapted from [NCVO Knowhow](#).



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