**Social Media Policy**

## **1.0 Purpose**

To provide rules governing the use of social media both during and after work hours and the disciplinary action for failure to adhere to this policy.

**1.1 Definition of Social Media**

Social Media includes but is not limited to the following:

* Facebook
* Twitter
* Linkedin
* YouTube
* BlogSpot
* MySpace

**1.2 Modes of Access to Social Media**

Access to Social Media includes access by any electronic means which may include but is not limited to the following:

* Telephone.
* Mobile phones including mobile phones owned by the employer or by the employee.
* Computers, including desktop and laptop computers, iPads and notebooks owned by the employer or by the employee.

**1.3 Use of Social Media in the Workplace**

The following rules concerning the use of social media in the workplace should be observed by all employees:

* Participation in social media and social networking sites in relation to non-work related matters is prohibited during working hours. This prohibition extends but is not limited to:
  + Watching videos on social media sites such as YouTube.
  + Sending or receiving blogs.
  + On-line shopping.
  + Sending and receiving non-work related Emails.
* Participation in social media and social networking sites in relation to work related matters are subject to the following rules:
* You are not permitted to use the employer’s computers, laptops or other equipment when participating in social media or social networking sites without the prior approval of management.
* You are not permitted to speak on behalf of your employer, nor to represent that you do so when participating in social media or social networking sites unless you have obtained the prior approval of management.
* You are not permitted to use your employer’s logo or trademark when participating in social media or social networking sites without explicit permission in writing from management.
* If you have approval to represent your employer on social media or social networking sites you must disclose that you are an employee of the business. Likewise, you are required to disclose that you are employed by the business if you post any comment that promotes or endorses your employer’s products or services in any way and/or mentions your employer’s employees, customers or competitors on any social media or social networking site.
* If you have approval to represent your employer for the purposes of developing a Web site or writing blogs that mentions your employer and/or your employer’s current or potential products, employees, customers and/or competitors, which necessitates you making comments or expressing personal views, you are expected to make clear on the Web site or on your written blogs that the views you express do not necessarily represent the views of your employer by posting a disclaimer in a prominent place.
* You are prohibited from using any confidential or secure information. This includes information about trademarks, upcoming product releases, sales, finances, number of products sold, number of employees, business strategy, and any other information that has not been publically released by your employer. If you have any questions about whether information has been released publically or doubts of any kind, you should contact management.
* You are also prohibited from using any confidential or secure information of your employer’s customers, clients, affiliates and of vendors with whom your employer does business.
* You must ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading.
* You are prohibited from disparaging your employer’s products and services.
* You should be aware that actions captured via images, posts or other online comments can reflect that of your employer. When participating in social media or on social networking sites, do not reference your employer, or your employer’s clients, affiliates, associates, partners, vendors, customers, or your fellow employee’s without their express consent.
* You are required to honour the privacy rights of your fellow employees, by seeking their permission before writing about or displaying internal company happenings that might be considered to be in breach of their privacy and confidentiality.
* You must be aware of and follow copyright. For your protection as well as for the protection of your employer, you must comply with all laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others. This means, for example, that you may not publish copyrighted material without the permission of the copyright owner whether that is your employer or a third party.
* You are not permitted to sell any product or service when participating in any social media or social networking sites that would compete with any of your employer’s products or services without the permission in writing of your employer. This includes, but is not limited to training, books, products, services and freelance writing. If in doubt, you should speak to management.
* You are prohibited from engaging in personal attacks or in making derogatory remarks against your employer, other employees, customers, co-workers, and competitors, when participating in any social media or social networking site, whether through actions captured via images, posts or other online comments.
* You are prohibited from engaging in commentary, content, or images in reference to your employer, customers, clients, affiliates, and vendors of your employer, other employees, co-workers, and competitors, when participating in any social media or social networking site that are obscene, pornographic, defamatory, profane, libellous, threatening, harassing or abusive or that can create a hostile work environment. Such postings may not only expose you to legal liability but violate your employer’s policies of employment on bullying and harassment.
* You are also prohibited from engaging in commentary, content or images about your fellow employees on social media or social networking sites that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, colour, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic, or that are sexually suggestive, humiliating or demeaning. Such postings may not only expose you to legal liability, but violate your employer’s policies of employment on discrimination and harassment.

**1.4 Use of Social Media after Working Hours**

The rules concerning the use of social media in workplace generally also apply to the use of social media on private social networks or to the use of social media after working hours.

Those rules will apply to you if:

* Your conduct, as an employee, causes sufficiently serious damage to the employment relationship between you and your employer; or
* Your conduct damages your employer’s interests; or
* Your conduct is incompatible with the duties you owe to your employer as an employee.

Your attention is drawn, in particular, to the rules governing the use of social media and/or participating in social networking sites which result in:

* The use of objectionable or insulting language
* Dishonesty
* Conflicts of interest
* Engaging in obstructionist activity contrary to the interests of your employer
* Soliciting your employer’s clients
* Disclosure or misuse of confidential information
* Conduct disparaging of your employer or of your employer’s business, products or services
* Conduct which breaches privacy, copyright and fair use laws
* Conduct involving personal attacks or making derogatory remarks
* Conduct which is considered to be obscene, pornographic, defamatory, profane, libellous, threatening, harassing, abusive, or may create a hostile work environment
* Conduct which is considered to be derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, colour, disability or any other legally protected characteristic, or that is sexually suggestive, humiliating or demeaning.

If your conduct in using social media after working hours is the subject of a complaint and is sufficiently referrable to your employer and to your employment relationship, then, notwithstanding that the conduct occurred after working hours, your conduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

**1.5 Confirmation of policy**

By signing this policy, I agree that I have read and understood the provisions outlined and explained to me. I understand that any questions relating to this policy can be forwarded to my manager for clarification and any failure to abide by this policy whether during or after normal working hours may lead to disciplinary action including summary dismissal.

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| --- | --- |
| Employee name |  |
| Employee signature |  |
| Date |  |