

# Beaumont HEALTH

Subject <b>SOCIAL NETWORKING AND OTHER WEB-BASED COMMUNICATIONS</b>		No. <b>297</b>	Page <b>1 of 4</b>
Prepared By <b>CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	Prior Issue Date <b>05/01/15</b>	Issue Date <b>10/1/15</b>	

## I. OBJECTIVE

**BEAUMONT HEALTH SYSTEM BELIEVES THAT PARTICIPATION IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES CAN PROMOTE BETTER COMMUNICATION WITH BEAUMONT HEALTH SYSTEM'S COLLEAGUES, CUSTOMERS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC, TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL MEDIA, AND OTHER COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS.** Such participation may include, but is not limited to e-mails, postings in online forums, blogs, microblogs, wikis or vlogs (Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, media sites, etc.).

## II. POLICY

### Social Networking and Other Web-Based Communications

Social Networking and other Web-Based communications produced by Beaumont Health System employees, physicians or volunteers on behalf of Beaumont in the online community must be consistent with Beaumont Health System policies, including the Code of Business and Ethical Conduct and the Beaumont Standards, and applicable laws concerning protected health information, privacy, confidentiality, copyright and trademarks.

Uses of Social Networking and other Web-Based Communications must be accurate and consistent with applicable laws governing communications. This policy is applicable while utilizing Beaumont equipment or while utilizing on behalf of Beaumont your own personal equipment, PDA, home computer, or other Web-Based Communications.

## III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, physicians and volunteers within all entities of Beaumont Health System.

## IV. GUIDELINES

Social Networking and other Web-Based Communication should never contain information that includes a personal patient identifier, such as name, room number, patient number, admission or discharge dates, or release a patient's personal health information in any way.

Social Networking and other Web-Based Communication must not contain Beaumont Health System confidential business, proprietary and/or trade-secret information (e.g., business or financial performance, research and development, information related to Beaumont Health System's relationships with third party payors and health care facilities, budgeting, marketing, research, equipment capabilities, business plans, and other similar business information). Consistent with the National Labor Relations Act, this prohibition does not prohibit Social Networking and other Web-Based Communications concerning employees' or physicians' terms and conditions of employment.

Beaumont Health System expects each employee, physician and volunteer will work in a cooperative, professional, and pleasant manner with management, supervisors, fellow employees, patients and their family members, visitors, vendors, and subcontractors, recognizing that each individual's obligation is to provide exemplary patient care. This

### **HUMAN RESOURCES, CORPORATE**

**Disclaimer: User must ensure that any printed copies of this policy/procedure are current by checking the policy/procedure web page before use.**



# Beaumont HEALTH

Subject <b>SOCIAL NETWORKING AND OTHER WEB-BASED COMMUNICATIONS</b>		No. <b>297</b>	Page <b>2 of 4</b>
Prepared By <b>CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	Prior Issue Date <b>05/01/15</b>	Issue Date <b>10/1/15</b>	

## IV. GUIDELINES (cont'd.)

expectation applies to use of Social Networking and Web-Based Communications. Therefore, communications that are prohibited under Beaumont Health System's Harassment and Discrimination Policy are prohibited under the Social Networking and Other Web-Based Communications Policy. As such, communications are prohibited which are vulgar, obscene, threatening, intimidating, harassing, discriminatory, or exhibiting hostility because of age, race, religion, sex, ethnicity, nationality, disability or other attributes protected by law, or willfully defamatory or libelous.

In addition to possible personal liability for prohibited communications, an individual will be subject to discipline under any applicable Beaumont Health System Policies. E-mail and Internet access is provided to support Beaumont Health System business purposes. Users who are given access to these tools may make incidental personal use of them during their non-working time.

Use of Social Networking and other Web-Based Communications on Beaumont Health System equipment during working time is permitted, if the use is for legitimate, pre-approved Beaumont business. Discuss the nature of the anticipated business use and the content of the message with your manager or supervisor and obtain their written approval prior to each use.

Beaumont Health System may require that an employee, physician or volunteer discontinue use of Beaumont Health System equipment for Social Networking and other Web-Based Communications if it believes their communications are in violation of this Policy or local, state or federal laws, including patient privacy laws.

### **Unofficial Participation in Online Forums**

Unless an individual has been designated in writing or verbally by an authorized Beaumont Health System representative (e.g., officer, manager, department head, supervisor) as an approved, official spokesperson for Beaumont Health System with respect to online communications, an individual's online communications must be clear that they do not reflect the opinion of Beaumont Health System. Each individual employee, physician or volunteer who has not been designated in writing or verbally by an authorized Beaumont Health System representative as an approved official spokesperson for Beaumont Health System, is personally responsible for his/her online communication (written, audio, video or otherwise).

### **Official Spokesperson or Other Job-Specific Participation in Online Forums**

If a media representative or non-traditional online media rep (including bloggers) contacts a Beaumont Health System employee, physician or volunteer about Beaumont Health System, its organization and its business related matters, or a patient, the contact must be handled as outlined in Beaumont Health System's Media Relations Policy.

Beaumont Health System strives to anticipate and manage crises situations to reduce disruption to its patients and their families, visitors, employees, physicians, vendors, and subcontractors,

## **HUMAN RESOURCES, CORPORATE**

**Disclaimer: User must ensure that any printed copies of this policy/procedure are current by checking the policy/procedure web page before use.**



Subject <b>SOCIAL NETWORKING AND OTHER WEB-BASED COMMUNICATIONS</b>		No. <b>297</b>	Page <b>3 of 4</b>
Prepared By <b>CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	Prior Issue Date <b>05/01/15</b>	Issue Date <b>10/1/15</b>	

#### **IV. GUIDELINES (cont'd.)**

and to maintain Beaumont Health System's reputation as the premier health care system in the markets it serves. To best serve these objectives and to assure that accurate information is released, only authorized personnel are to provide information about Beaumont Health System's organization, business, and patients to the news media.

In some instances, a person's department or another Beaumont Health System facility, or department may ask them to participate in online forums in other functional, job-specific capacities. Examples might include, as a recruitment officer on LinkedIn or to share best practices on certain trade sites related to health care quality or the participant's profession. Before participating, the individual should discuss involvement with his/her supervisor, receive approval and agree on parameters for the project, as well as the length of participation. As appropriate, guidance from the Beaumont Health System Human Resources, Corporate Communications or Legal Affairs should be sought.

##### **Beaumont-Sponsored Websites**

Individuals using Beaumont Health System websites should refrain from inputting information on behalf of Beaumont Health System on the copyrighted materials (written, audio, video and all other electronic forms), as well as, language that is obscene, defamatory, derogatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, or humiliating to another person or entity, or otherwise in violation of this Policy.

Individuals who have concerns regarding the inappropriate use of Beaumont Health System sponsored websites are encouraged to contact their immediate supervisor, local Human Resources representative, or Compliance Line at 888-495-5100.

##### **Legal Compliance of Policy**

All employees, physicians, or volunteers are expected to know and follow this Policy. Nothing in this Policy or the policies referenced in this Policy is intended to prevent employees, and physicians from engaging in lawful conduct under the National Labor Relations Act.

Beaumont Health System prohibits adverse action against any employee for reporting any violation of this Policy or cooperating in investigation of the Policy.

Any violation of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination consistent with Beaumont Health System policies.

#### **V. DISTRIBUTION**

- A. This policy is available on the Beaumont Health System website or in the Human Resources offices.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES, CORPORATE**

**Disclaimer: User must ensure that any printed copies of this policy/procedure are current by checking the policy/procedure web page before use.**





Subject <b>SOCIAL NETWORKING AND OTHER WEB-BASED COMMUNICATIONS</b>		No. <b>297</b>	Page <b>4 of 4</b>
Prepared By <b>CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCES</b>	Prior Issue Date <b>05/01/15</b>	Issue Date <b>10/1/15</b>	

## **VI. REVIEW AND REISSUE DATE**

- A. This date will be three years from the month and year in which the policy is finalized, unless the organization would like to establish an earlier date. All policies are to be updated when changes to policies or procedures occur or on a regularly scheduled basis as established by Beaumont Health System.

## **VII. DISCRETION TO MODIFY POLICY**

- A. Beaumont Health System periodically reviews and revises its policies. This policy, as with all others, is subject to change at Beaumont Health System's discretion without prior notice. This policy supersedes all prior written policies on this subject. This policy is located on the Beaumont Health System website.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES, CORPORATE**

**Disclaimer: User must ensure that any printed copies of this policy/procedure are current by checking the policy/procedure web page before use.**