

Disclaimer

This form is provided as a sample for informational purposes only in demonstrating relationships with respect to insurance contracts and contracts of indemnity, and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should contact your attorney to obtain advice with respect to any particular contractual or legal matter as may apply in your state. Use of this form does not create an attorney-client relationship.

Please use this as a reference for creating a guideline for a social and digital media policy for your church. We hope it will provide you peace of mind in the administration of your ministry. While this is not intended to be inclusive of every aspect of social media within your church, it can help you to develop a general structure around the creation of a policy.

DELETE THIS PAGE

SAMPLE USE ONLY

INTERNET, EMAIL, COMPUTER, ELECTRONIC MEDIA & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
Adopted by "CHURCH" on month/day/year

"CHURCH" uses various forms of electronic communication including, but not limited to: computers, email, telephones, voicemail, instant message, text message, internet, cell phones and smart phones (hereafter referred to as "electronic communications"). Electronic communications, including all software, databases, hardware, and digital files, remain the sole property of "CHURCH" and are to be used only for church, not for personal use.

The following rules apply to all forms of electronic communications and media that are: (1) accessed on or from "CHURCH" premises; (2) accessed using "CHURCH" computer or telecommunications equipment, or via "CHURCH"-paid access methods; and/or (3) used in a manner which identifies "CHURCH". The following list is not exhaustive and "CHURCH" may implement additional rules from time to time.

- Electronic communication and media may not be used in any manner that would be discriminatory, harassing, or obscene, or for any other purpose that is illegal, against church policy, or not in the best interest of "CHURCH". Those who misuse electronic communications and engage in defamation, copyright or trademark infringement, plagiarism, misappropriation of trade secrets, discrimination, harassment, or related actions will be subject to discipline and/or immediate discharge. Employees/volunteers may not install personal software on church computer systems.
- Threats, intimidation, ethnic slurs, personal insults, pornography, obscenity, racial or religious intolerance, abuse, and any other form of behavior prohibited by law is also prohibited via social media channels. Do not engage in any such behavior and do not make, comment, share, retweet or otherwise participate in any such behavior, comments, or remarks.
- Employees'/volunteers' own electronic media used on church premises are applicable to all other policies, including no-tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or retaliation in the workplace. Overuse of personal devices that negatively impacts an employee's work performance will be addressed under the church's performance policies.
- All electronic information created by any employee on church premises or transmitted to church property using any means of electronic communication is the property of the church and remains the property of the church. You should not assume that any electronic communications are private or confidential and should transmit personal sensitive information in other ways. Personal passwords may be used for purposes of security, but the use of a personal password does not affect the church's ownership of the electronic information. The church will override all personal passwords if necessary for any reason.
- The church reserves the right to access and review electronic files, messages, internet use, blogs, tweets, instant messages, text messages, email, voice mail, and other digital archives, and to monitor the use of electronic communications as necessary to ensure that no misuse or violation of church policy or any law occurs. All such information may be used and/or disclosed to others, in accordance with business needs and the law. The

church reserves the right to keep a record of all passwords and codes used and/or may be able to override any such password system.

- Employees/volunteers are not permitted to access the electronic communications of other employees. No employee/volunteer may install or use anonymous e-mail transmission programs or encryption of e-mail communications.
- Employees who use devices on which information may be received and/or stored, including but not limited to cell phones, portable computers, and voice mail communications are required to use these methods in strict compliance with the church's policy that addresses confidential and sensitive information. These communications tools should not be used for communicating confidential or sensitive information.
- The church supports the need for employees/volunteers to have occasional personal use and access to the Internet, websites, and other types of church-paid computer access. Employees/volunteers are permitted occasional access with the understanding that the activity does not impact their overall work performance and expected results. However, no employee or volunteer is permitted to use the church email or social media platforms for personal use.
- Any information about "CHURCH", its products, people or services, or other types of information that will appear in the electronic media about the church must be approved before the information is placed on any electronic information resource that is accessible to others. Any breach of this policy will not be tolerated and disciplinary action and/or legal action may be taken.
- If you are communicating with youth as a part of your affiliation with the Church through any digital or social media, use transparency and in a group, or do not communicate at all. If it is necessary to send an individual message, copy another adult or a parent. Do not initiate a one-on-one relationship (such as friending from a personal profile) with a minor.

Social Media

"CHURCH" recognizes social media as a useful tool to engage with the community and foster its mission. The church also maintains a commitment to protecting its reputation, values and policies. "CHURCH" asks that you take ownership of the privilege and responsibilities inherent in social media use.

Social Media Use is a Privilege

Accessing and using social media sites, (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, emails, texting, blogs, message boards, personal websites, chat rooms, group discussions, etc.) is a privilege, not a right or entitlement. Social Media involves any form of "communication" or socializing using servers or internet/intranet websites. You must use social media sites responsibly, with constant consideration of "CHURCH"'s reputation, mission, values and policies. At any time, if the church determines your usage undermines the church, you will lose this privilege and not be allowed to access social media sites.

General Privacy and Social Media

Respect your privacy, your coworkers' privacy, and the church's privacy by not providing personal or confidential information without permission. Also, employees/volunteers are prohibited from sharing anything via social media that could violate another employee's or volunteer's right to personal privacy. Remember that all postings are permanent in that they can be screenshotted and shared even if the original poster removes the content.

Social Media Use Must Not Interfere With the Performance of Your Job

You are permitted to access social media sites while at work as long as the use does not interfere with the optimum performance of your job. The church depends on its employee's productivity and the use of social media at the cost of this productivity undermines the church's mission.

We Will Monitor Your Use

According to the Internet, Email, Computer, Electronic Media policy above, the church expects its resources are used for church work. "CHURCH" has the right (and will exercise that right) to monitor your electronic usage. This includes the right to monitor your use of social media sites when you use any electronic equipment, servers or services provided to you by the church. The church has interest in ensuring that its equipment, services and employees are cost effective and are used for church purposes. We will monitor usage to ensure these purposes are upheld.

You Should Not Expect Privacy and You Should Be Transparent

Do not expect any privacy of your use, transmissions or received postings or blogging, even when you set "privacy" settings. We may ask you to provide us with the passwords to social media accounts you maintain on behalf of the church in the event we need to access or change posted information on our social media pages or profiles. Also, even when you are "talking" on social media sites as an individual, people may perceive you to be talking on behalf of the church. If you blog or discuss topics related to our church, be upfront and explain that you work for the church; however, if you are not an official spokesperson, add a disclaimer to the effect: "The opinions, perceptions, beliefs and positions expressed here are my own and are not necessarily aligned with those of "CHURCH", its partners or employees." Do not use the church logo, trademark or proprietary information without express, written consent of the church.

You May Not Use Social Media Sites to Harass, Discriminate or Defame

The church is committed to providing its employees/volunteers with a workplace that is free of discrimination and harassment. You may not use social media sites to post or talk about employees, congregants, vendors, suppliers or other third parties you know through the church in a way that may be interpreted as harassing, sexually harassing or discriminatory. This applies to behavior on social media sites you access or use outside of work or after working hours as well. You also may be held personally liable for the content of your own blogs or internet postings with regard to harassment or defamation claims.

Reporting Behavior

If you see any violation of this Policy by any other employee/volunteer of the church, report it to "DESIGNATED PERSON" at "CHURCH". If you have questions about the Policy, please contact "DESIGNATED PERSON".

I have received a copy of "CHURCH"'s INTERNET, EMAIL, COMPUTER, ELECTRONIC MEDIA & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY. I understand it is my responsibility to become familiar with and adhere to the information contained herein. I understand that these policies are the property of "CHURCH".

Print Name

Date

Signature

SAMPLE USE ONLY