



Social Media Policy

Social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data. It includes online social forums such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image-sharing, YouTube and Flickr.

This policy provides guidance for employee, volunteer and trustee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a similar manner.

The following principles apply to professional use of social media on behalf of Evergreen Care UK (ECUK) as well as personal use of social media when referencing the organisation:

Employees, volunteers and trustees need to know and adhere to the organisation's Employee/Volunteer Handbook, and other policies when using social media in relation to ECUK.

Employees, volunteers and trustees should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images, as well as the organisation's image. The information that employees, volunteers and trustees post or publish may be public information for a long time.

If there is information for a Social Media site it should be posted by ECUK's Social Media Officer.

Employees, volunteers and trustees should be aware that ECUK may observe and monitor content and information made available by employees and volunteers through social media. Employees, Volunteers and Trustees should not arrange the posting of material that is inappropriate including that which is harmful to the organisation, its staff, volunteers or service users. Doing so may result in disciplinary action or termination.

Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include reproducing negative press articles, posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, bullying or that could create a hostile work environment or bring the organisation into disrepute. Doing so may result in disciplinary action or termination.

Employees, volunteers and trustees are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, they should check with their Line Manager.

- Social Media platforms are vulnerable to being accessed by external 3rd parties. Therefore, communications between staff and volunteers and their clients must not take place on these platforms in or out of working hours. However, 'WhatsApp' is a safe media platform and can be used.
- Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Employees, volunteers or trustees should refer these enquiries to the Chief Operations Officer.
- If employees, volunteers and trustees encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, they should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
- Employees, volunteers and trustees should get appropriate permission before they refer to or post images of current or former employees, members, or suppliers. Additionally, employees, volunteers and trustees should get appropriate permission to use a third party's copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks or other intellectual property. Third party articles cannot be claimed as our own. However, they can be shared, identifying the source of the information.
- If employees, volunteers and trustees see content on social media that disparages or reflects poorly on the charity they should refer this to the Chief Operations Officer.
- Social media use shouldn't interfere with employee's/volunteer's/trustee's responsibilities at ECUK. The computer systems are to be used for business purposes only. When using ECUK's computer systems, use of social media for business purposes is allowed (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Evergreen Care UK blogs, Street Life, Google+ and LinkedIn), but personal use of social media networks or personal blogging is not allowed and could result in disciplinary action or termination.
- Subject to applicable law, after-hours online activity that violates the Employee Handbook or any other ECUK policy may subject personnel to disciplinary action or termination.

If employees, volunteers or trustees publish personal content that involves work or subjects associated with the organisation, a disclaimer should be used, such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and may not represent ECUK's positions, strategies or opinions."

Employees, volunteers and trustees must keep ECUK's related social media accounts separate from personal accounts: the exception being Facebook where named people within ECUK will have access via their personal e mail account under the authority of the Chief Operations Officer. All posts will be monitored and will need to adhere to this policy's guidelines on social media posts.

Personnel sharing information related to the organisation must ensure their personal social media accounts do not contain offensive or inappropriate material.

If staff, volunteers or trustees use social networking websites they should not express personal opinions that could reflect negatively on the reputation of ECUK; A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action or termination.

- Any official statements on behalf of ECUK should be agreed by the Chief Operations Officer.

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