



Social (media) networking websites and blogs policy

Purpose

This policy sets out the Charity's position on employees' use of social (media) networking websites and blogs, whether conducted on Company media and in work time or your own private media in your own time.

Your responsibilities

Social networking websites and blogs offer a useful means of keeping in touch with friends and colleagues, and they can be used to exchange views and thoughts on shared interests, both personal and work-related.

The charity does not object to you setting up personal accounts on social networking websites or blogs on the internet, in your own time and using your own computer systems. However, you must not do so on charity media or in work time.

You must not link your personal social networking accounts or blogs to the Company's website. Any such links require the charity's prior consent.

You must not disclose organisational secrets, breach copyright, defame the Company or its clients, suppliers, customers or employees, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998 on your blog or on your social networking website.

Social networking website posts or blogs should not be insulting or abusive to employees, suppliers, Company contacts, clients or customers.

References to the Company

If reference is made to your employment or to the charity, you should state to the reader that the views that you express are your views only and that they do not reflect the views of the charity. You should include a notice such as the following:

"The views expressed on this website/blog are mine alone and do not reflect the views of my employer."

You should always be conscious of your duty as an employee to act in good faith and in the best interests of the charity under UK law. The charity will not tolerate criticisms posted in messages in the public domain or on blogs about the charity or any other person connected to the charity.

You must not bring the charity into disrepute through the content of your website entries or your blogs.

Any misuse of social networking websites or blogs as mentioned above may be regarded as a disciplinary offence and may result in dismissal.

You should be aware that any information contained in social networking websites may be used in evidence, if relevant, to any disciplinary proceedings.

Third parties

You must not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the Company or to any third party that has disclosed information to the Company.

Social media in your personal life

The Charity recognises that many employees make use of social media in a personal capacity. While they are not acting on behalf of Childhood First, employees must be aware that they can damage the Charity if they are recognised as being one of our employees.

Employees are allowed to say that they work for the Charity, which recognises that it is natural for its staff sometimes to want to discuss their work on social media. However, the employee's online profile (for example, the name of a blog or a Twitter name) must not contain the Charity's trading names.

If employees do discuss their work on social media (for example, giving opinions on their specialism or the sectors in which the Charity operates), they must include on their profile a statement along the following lines: "The views I express here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."

Any communications that employees make in a personal capacity through social media must not:

- bring the organisation into disrepute, for example by:
 - criticising or arguing with customers, colleagues or rivals;
 - making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
- breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - revealing trade secrets or information owned by the organisation;
 - giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or customer contact) or organisation (such as a rival business); or
- breach copyright, for example by:
 - using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - failing to give acknowledgement where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
- do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
- using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of the Charity); or
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive (or links to such content).

Employee requirements include:

- not accepting friend requests from current and/or ex-children and young people;
- only posting things that they would be happy to be attributed to them as professionals;
- using the tightest privacy settings possible.

Procedure

Breaches of this policy will be dealt with under the charity's Disciplinary Procedure. You should be aware that the charity regards breach of any part of this policy as gross misconduct that may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal without notice.

If you become aware of information relating to the charity posted on the internet, you should bring this to the attention of your manager.

Key Legislation

- Equality Act 2010
- Defamation Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Investigatory Powers Act 2016
- Investigatory Powers (Interception by Businesses etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/356)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679 EU)
- Article 29 Data Protection Working Party opinion on data processing at work

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