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Applicability: All DDSN Employees

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the minimum guidelines governing the appropriate and prohibited use of social media sites by employees of the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN). Social media use includes all means of communication or posting information or content of any sort on the internet, including your own or someone else's blog, personal websites, social network or affinity websites, chat rooms or wiki - whether or not associated or affiliated with DDSN - as well as any other form of electronic communication. Commonly used social media sites include, *but are not limited* to, Facebook®, Twitter®, Instagram, Tumblr, Flickr®, LinkedIn®, Wikipedia, or YouTube®.

POLICY

Business-Related Social Media Activity

If an employee must use social media sites in the course of conducting business for DDSN, he/she must comply with the following guidelines whether such sites are accessed through DDSN's resources or personal devices.

1. Information published by DDSN employees through social media sites must comply with Privacy and Security regulations and policies.
2. Any information published must be in compliance with the requirements and guidelines provided in this policy, as well as DDSN Directive 413-03-DD: DDSN Code of Conduct, and DDSN Directive 367-09-DD: Acceptable Use of Network Services and the Interest.
3. Content published on social media sites must be in compliance with requirements of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.
4. Any media or press contact made to an employee about content posted through social media must be referred immediately to DDSN's Legislative Liaison and Public Information Officer, at (803) 898-9723.
5. Employees are prohibited from using social media sites in their jobs to make statements or post images that:
 - a. Violate consumers' privacy;
 - b. Contain hate speech, convey violence, or are discriminatory;
 - c. Contain profanity, obscenity, or vulgarity;
 - d. Contain nudity in description or images (pictures);
 - e. Are malicious, abusive, or unlawful;
 - f. Are injurious, offensive, threatening, intimidating, or coercive to other employees or consumers and their families; or
 - g. Harass or are intended to injure, bully, or harm consumers or employees.
6. Any violation of this policy must be reported immediately to the facility's management and Human Resources (HR). If the violation involves Personal Health Information (PHI), consumer privacy or employee privacy, it must also be reported to the General Counsel, the Director of Governmental Affairs and Community Relations, and the Information Security Officer.
7. Employees should be aware that postings made to social media sites and other online forums outside of work can blur the distinction between their professional and personal identities. When employees are expressing their personal opinions on social media it is best to include a disclaimer such as, "The postings on this site are my own and do not

necessarily reflect the views of DDSN, coworkers, consumers, families, or other people working on behalf of DDSN.”

Personal Social Media Activity

Social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends, and coworkers. The use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities.

DDSN employees are urged to always think carefully before posting to social media sites in their personal time. Expressing oneself is important; however, being civil to others and their opinions, and refraining from posting personal information about others, unless you have received their permission, goes a long way towards avoiding conflicts in personal and working relationships.

Ultimately, you are responsible for the comments and content you publish on any form of social media. Avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, or intimidating; that belittle or mock consumers, families or other stakeholders; or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone’s reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion, nationality, or any other status protected by law.

Be mindful that what you publish will be publicly available for a very long time and subject to review by individuals outside of your intended audience. Be mindful also that if DDSN management receives a complaint from an employee about information you have posted regarding coworkers, consumers or their families, DDSN will need to investigate the complaint to ensure that there has been no violation of HIPAA, the established guidelines for employee behavior, or other DDSN policies. In the event there is such a complaint, you will be expected to cooperate in any investigation of that complaint.

With regard to DDSN employees’ personal usage of social media, it is the policy that:

1. Employees must not use a DDSN-owned email address to establish a personal social media account or presence.
2. Employees must not conduct DDSN business through personal social media channels.
3. Employees are prohibited from impersonating DDSN or its management; using DDSN logos; making statements on behalf of DDSN without authorization; or making statements that can be construed as establishing DDSN’s official position or policy on any particular issue over personal social networks or tools.
4. Employees may not advertise the use of DDSN facilities for events, social gatherings, meetings, or conferences without written consent of the DDSN State Director, Facility Administrators or designees.

5. DDSN prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation or violation of this policy, or for cooperating in an investigation of a possible violation of policy. An employee who retaliates against another for reporting a deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Violations of any portion of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.



Patrick J. Maley
Deputy Director



Mary Poole
State Director

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