

AASW Social Media Guidelines

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AASW Social Media Guidelines

1. GUIDELINES INTRODUCTION

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) recognises the importance of participating in online social media, as a membership service, as part of our marketing strategy and as part of our commitment to promoting professional excellence and social justice. AASW will use social media to convey information about the Association's activities; promote AASW membership; raise awareness about campaigns and CPD activities; encourage discussion about issues relating to the profession and social justice; and respond to news or negative publicity.

We are committed to ensuring that we participate in social media in a responsible way. AASW social media activity is limited to using the following platforms: Facebook (national and branch pages), Twitter (national account), Vimeo (national account) and LinkedIn. The Facebook and Twitter pages may include disseminating information on behalf of reputable, identified groups of the AASW, including branches, practice groups and authorised committees, and responding to comments made by others. Vimeo is for publishing videos and audio. The aim of the blog is for greater interaction with members and others in a controlled online environment.

AASW must ensure that these communications maintain our brand identity, integrity and reputation while minimising actual and potential risks, whether used inside or outside of the workplace. The AASW Social Media Guidelines have been developed to support AASW staff and office holders when participating in this form of marketing and communications to: represent our Association accurately; and share the objectives of the AASW in a safe, responsible and accountable manner.

AASW's Social Media Guidelines includes rules and guidelines for authorised use of social media on behalf of AASW and personal forms of social media.

2. SCOPE

This guidelines apply to all staff, contractors and officeholders operating within or for the AASW who use a social media platform in their professional capacity for the AASW, or who identify themselves as an AASW employee, or contractor in a personal capacity, including:

- Adding content to official AASW social media pages, blogs, wikis and forums
- Making references to the AASW (AASW's business, services, employees or members) within a personal capacity on a social media platform including your personal blog, external blogs, wikis, discussion forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter

These guidelines do not apply to AASW staff in their personal use of social media platforms where the staff member makes no reference to AASW.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms allow users to share and upload media content such as photographs, videos information and comments to the Internet quickly and easily.

Social networks are one of the fastest growing areas in modern communications technology and are an effective way to encourage interactive communication with stakeholders. Examples of social media sites are:

- Social networking sites such as **Facebook and LinkedIn**
- Video and photo sharing sites, such as **Vimeo, Flickr and YouTube**
- Micro-blogs such as **Twitter**

- Blogs
- Forums and discussion boards
- Encyclopaedias such as **Wikipedia**
- Online communities

'Official AASW social media pages' refers to social media pages with AASW branding, at this stage, includes **Facebook** pages, and a national **Twitter** page and **Vimeo** account managed by the AASW National Office.

4. PURPOSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

When posting media content to social networking sites, it is helpful to remember the reasons for doing so. When using AASW's social media sites the aims should be to:

- Promote the AASW objectives
- Reach a wider, more diverse audience
- Educate and inform members
- Distribute information about AASW reputable and identified groups and activities
- Promote social work research for professionals and the community
- Promote CPD events and opportunities for members
- Learn about the membership and its needs
- Engage with the membership and wider social work community as a communication tool
- Encourage dialogue relating to social work related issues
- Showcase AASW's activities
- Make contributions in a professional capacity of social work related issues.

5. GUIDELINE DETAILS

5.1 Establishing social media activities and profiles

- All social media initiatives should be approved by the CEO prior to being implemented.
- When an AASW branch (or other entity) proposes a social media presence, they must submit a proposal to the Senior Manager Policy & Advocacy to be evaluated for suitability and sustainability.
- As part of the proposal, a committee or responsible group should be established that will be accountable for the social media initiative which follows these Social Media Guidelines. The Branch Manager or responsible AASW employee plus the Branch Management Committee will also be responsible for ensuring the guidelines are followed.
- Once the proposal is accepted by the CEO, the Branch Management President and staff will sign an agreement indicating that they will adhere to these guidelines.

The purpose of this process is to protect the AASW's brand and reputation.

5.2 Engaging in social media on behalf of AASW & professional use of social media

Only employees and office bearers who are authorised by AASW's Senior Manager Policy and Advocacy or the CEO are to operate the social media platform on behalf of the AASW

5.3 Rules

When posting online to an official AASW social media platform:

- Comply with the constitution, by-laws and returning officer directions relating to the publication of material about the elections and candidates for elections to the National Presidency, the AASW Board or Branch Management Committee positions.

- Ensure that all content published is accurate, respectful and not misleading.
- Respect copyright laws and attribute work to the original source wherever possible.
- Adhere to the AASW *Code of Ethics* (2010) including the values and ethical responsibilities outlined.
- Do not publish any material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist and sexist or breaches a Court Suppression Order or is otherwise unlawful.
- Withhold confidential information relating to AASW or its members. This includes but is not limited to: personal details and contact information; financial information; Board or Committee proceedings.

5.4 Guidelines

Staff and office bearers who are authorised to post or create content on an official AASW social media platform should:

- Act in a professional manner at all times and in the best interests of AASW
- Ensure all content must be relevant, engaging, well written/presented and meet the specified goals or purposes listed in these guidelines. All content must be cleared with the appropriate rights and permissions. If uncertain with any information, material or conversation, discuss the content with the Senior Manager Policy and Advocacy.
- Be aware of specific social media channels and etiquette and understand views and feelings of the target community.
- Request appropriate training and assistance.
- Respect all stakeholders, and the privacy of colleagues and fellow volunteers.
- All employees and officeholders must identify themselves and their position clearly as employees or volunteers of AASW when posting comments or responses from their personal accounts.
- Agree that content and contacts will remain the property of the AASW.
- Maintain the security of passwords and upkeep of these accounts.
- Not imply AASW endorsement of personal views.
- Not comment on internal AASW matters unless explicitly connected to the approved purpose of your project.
- Ensure all information posted or comments made on AASW policy or activities is appropriate to the individual's area of expertise and authority, remains politically neutral and does not breach any confidentiality guidelines and that a person is not the first to make a significant announcement (unless specifically given permission to do so), and avoid announcements related to unconfirmed decisions.
- Seek an official response if needed. If you spot a potential issue and believe an official AASW response is needed, bring it to the attention of your manager or Senior Management before it reaches a crisis situation.
- Use AASW branding in accordance with the AASW Visual Identity Guidelines.

If staff, volunteers or members notice inappropriate or unlawful online content relating to the Association or content published is in breach of these guidelines, this should be reported to AASW Senior Management via email: aaswnat@asw.asn.au or socialpolicy@asw.asn.au, by phone on 02 6199 5000 during office hours. If unlawful content is published or noticed after normal business hours and you believe the situation requires urgent attention, please contact the Police and follow their advice.

5.4 Personal spaces and blogs that refer to the AASW

When referring to the AASW in a personal capacity:

- Show respect for your audience

- Uphold the AASW *Code of Ethics* (2010) including the values and ethical responsibilities outlined in this document.
- Be judicious about what you write
- When making comments or expressing opinions be sure to identify these as your own, not those of the AASW. Consider using a disclaimer if appropriate. This might say, 'the view expressed in this blog are my own and not those of the Australian Association of Social Workers'.
- Ensure your participation in social media does not undermine a person's effectiveness at work or in your volunteer role.
- You cannot use the AASW logo or name, or post any privileged information, including copyrighted information or company-issued documents.
- You cannot post photographs of employees, members or volunteers, nor can employees post photographs of persons engaged in AASW business or of AASW events without written permission.
- Contact AASW Senior Management immediately if contacted by the media about any post that relates to AASW business.

5.5 Third-party hyperlinks

Links from the AASW website and social media are only made to sites that are relevant to the AASW mission and are relevant to the AASW and its members. The AASW does not normally link to personal websites or websites selling merchandise unless they are specifically relevant. If you are uncertain, contact AASW Senior Management.

- Links should be relevant to the content they are linking to/from and be suitable for the likely audience.
- The AASW does not link to external sites in return for cash, services or any other in kind consideration (commonly known as 'link exchanges').
- The AASW does not normally link to sites that are not free to access. However, users may need to be members to access content.

Hyperlinks should be included for a number of reasons, including:

- For further relevant information or other key source material.
- For background information.
- For useful practical information.

5.6 Acknowledgment and agreement

All AASW employees and office holders are required to sign a written acknowledgement that they have received, read, understood and agreed to comply with the AASW Media Policy, rules and these Guidelines.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

National Office, Communications:

- Administer online policies and procedures
- Ensure that sites conforms with AASW Visual Identity Guide standards and clearly identifies your site
- Maintain and publish content to the official AASW social media National accounts (including monitoring and responding to messages and comments via Twitter and the blog)
- Coordinate the availability of support materials and tools to support staff/office holders in their use of social media, including training when appropriate

- Develop and maintain appropriate standards, guidelines and tools for social media usage, including content
- Provide advice on target audiences, key messages and branding as required
- Assist with any issues and social media implementation and use
- Consult with relevant Senior Manager before publishing or responding to potentially damaging content.

Staff and office holders:

- Ensure approval has been granted for the social media initiative from CEO or relevant Senior Manager
- Sign agreement to follow Guidelines

Those authorised to maintain social media accounts:

- Publish content to relevant approved social media pages
- Maintain a positive online presence
- Act quickly to report any potentially damaging online material or behaviour

CEO and Senior Managers

- Grant approval for social media initiative
- Ensure that staff and office holders understand and comply with these guidelines
- Provide opportunities for staff, volunteers and office holders to identify and report offensive online material or behaviour
- Act to quickly remedy issues when they arise and support staff and volunteers through these processes

Board & Branch Management Committees

- Encourage social workers to contribute to AASW social media platforms positively
- Help establish a thriving online community
- Assist in the monitoring of content and alert AASW National or Branch Office of presence of inappropriate content or behaviour
- Contribute ideas and content to National Office for social media platforms.

7. DISCLAIMER & AASW FACEBOOK USERS GUIDELINES

All AASW social media pages will carry the disclaimer:

'The comments and posting on this site do not necessarily represent the official views of the AASW. The AASW accepts no liability for the content of this site.'

All AASW *Facebook* pages will carry the 'AASW Facebook Users Guidelines.

8. MAINTENANCE & MODERATION

- An AASW staff member or office holder determined by the CEO/Senior Manager Policy and Advocacy will be tasked as the manager of a social media account, and have responsibility for maintaining and monitoring it.
- Facebook page settings will have external posting ability disabled.

The staff member or office holder appointed to manage a social media account is responsible for:

- Posting content and maintaining information
- Responding quickly to any questions or criticism directed at the AASW (this may include liaising with Senior Management for an appropriate response)
- Uploading new content and photos (this could include re-posting content from the National AASW website)
- Ensuring all content is in accordance with the AASW Social Media Guidelines, AASW *Code of Ethics* (2010), the appropriate section of the AASW Human Resources Manual and any other AASW communications/media guidelines.

9. ACTIONS FOR UNACCEPTABLE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- AASW Senior Managers or their delegates may monitor all AASW social media pages and reserve the right to arrange to remove content at any time. AASW reserves the right to monitor comments or discussions about AASW, its employees and members and the industry, posted by anyone. AASW reserves the right to use content management tools to monitor, review or block content on sites that violate AASW rules and guidelines.
- All postings, comments or content that do not adhere to the Rules and Guidelines (5.3 and 5.4 of these guidelines) will be arranged to be removed by the AASW National Office as soon as possible. This includes but is not limited to those that are: defamatory, racist, sexist, threatening, insulting, unlawful and threatening to another's privacy or may not comply with regulations relating to AASW elections.
- Threats to the safety of employees, volunteers or members of the public will be reported to the police immediately, who will advise further action.
- Details of inappropriate or unacceptable AASW social media platform use will be recorded by the National Office in case further action is required.
- Please note: comments or questions which are critical of the AASW, defamatory or likely to cause offence to a reasonable person, are not considered unacceptable and should not automatically be removed. Instead, a Senior Manager should be consulted and a response posted as soon as possible.

9.1 Reporting inappropriate or unacceptable content

AASW requests and strongly urges employees and volunteers to report any violations of the Rules and Guidelines or possible or perceived violations to AASW Senior Management by emailing aaswnat@asw.asn.au or phone 02 6199 5000.

9.2 Implications of unacceptable use of social media for individuals

Any breach of these guidelines will be treated as a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action including termination of employment or (for contractors) the termination or non-renewal of contractual arrangements or (for office bearers) the termination of participation or official positions in AASW committees or groups.

Other disciplinary action that may be taken includes, but is not limited to, issuing a formal warning, directing people to attend mandatory training, suspension from the workplace and/or permanently or temporarily denying access to all or part of AASW's computer network. AASW reserves the right to take legal action where necessary against employees who engage in prohibited or unlawful conduct.

10. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW OF GUIDELINES

The CEO/Senior Manager Policy & Advocacy is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of these guidelines.

A Social media Implementation Plan will be developed for each social media platform before being launched by AASW.

These guidelines will be reviewed every two years, unless an urgent review is required earlier by the CEO/Senior Manager Policy and Advocacy.

11. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these guidelines, the following definitions apply:

Social media (sometimes referred to as 'social networking') includes all internet-based publishing technologies. Most forms of Social Media are interactive, allowing authors, readers and publishers to connect and interact with one another. The published material can often be accessed by anyone. Forms of Social Media include, but are not limited to, social or business networking sites (i.e. Facebook, LinkedIn), video and/or photo sharing websites (i.e. YouTube, Flickr), business/corporate and personal blogs, micro-blogs (i.e. Twitter), chat rooms and forums and/or Social Media:

The list of social media types is extensive with new and innovative social media sites being developed almost every day. AASW can determine what social media platform adds value to its particular needs. This list is provided as a guide to the types of social media currently available:

- *Social networking sites*: are websites that allow you to create a personal profile about yourself and then chat and share information with others such as family and friends eg, Facebook, Edmodo, Myspace, LinkedIn, Yammer)
- *Video, audio and photo sharing websites*: are sites that allow you to upload and share videos, sounds and photos which can be viewed/heard by web users the world over eg, Flickr, YouTube, iTunes U, Vimeo, SoundCloud
- *Blog*: A blog (short for web log) is a kind of online diary, where you regularly post about your life, your hobbies, business, news or other interests. It is a way of having your own space in the virtual world eg, WordPress, Blogger
- *Micro blogging apps*: are websites that post micro-blog like posts to announce what you are currently doing eg, Twitter, Yammer, Tumblr
- *Location-based apps*: (also known as *Geolocation*) are applications with the capability to detect and record where you and other people are located
- *Wikis*: are websites where users create, edit and share information about a particular subject or topic eg, Wikipedia, Wikispaces
- *Online gaming*: are games played over some form of computer network and are often based around a community of users eg, Steam
- *News aggregation*: news aggregators provide a list of the latest news stories published by users from a range of different web sites eg, Digg
- *Ning*: an online platform for people and organisations to create custom social networks around specific interests. Ning offers the ability to create an invited closed community website with a customised appearance and feel, feature sets such as forums, blogs, photos, and videos
- *Forums or message boards*: are online discussion sites where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages
- *Online multiplayer gaming platforms*: are multiplayer video games which are capable of supporting hundreds or thousands of players simultaneously and usually feature at least one persistent world (eg, World of Warcraft).

12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- AASW Code of Ethics (2010)
- Human Resources Manual
- Important things to remember when participating in AASW social media
- AASW Visual Identity Guide