



SALT SPRING ISLAND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Social Media Code of Conduct August, 2016

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees of Salt Spring & Southern Gulf Islands Community Services Society and its related companies (SSICS).

For the purposes of this policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary including, without limitation, blogs, wiki's, and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube.

This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding confidentiality, ethics and the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the Internet, including but not limited to:

- SSICS Code of Ethics

- Employee Confidentiality Agreement

- Board Members' Code of Conduct

- Personnel Policy – Computer, Electronic Mail and Internet Use

- Management and Administration Policy – Technology & Computer Use

Social Media and SSICS

The purpose of social media is to facilitate connections between people that would not otherwise happen. It can be an important tool in building community and in connecting people outside the organization with others who can help them and with the services of SSICS.

Social media necessarily include personal information for users and there is a very careful balance between personal and professional information and the transparency required in building a community. For SSICS, the personal information of all other users, community members must be guarded carefully.

While, in general, social media is a place to discuss controversial topics, have debates and post opinions that may or may not be popular on all things, SSICS will only use social media for the purpose of disseminating information that is otherwise public and providing connections between other willing participants in building a community around issues that are central to SSICS services and programs. Opinions on matters that are related to SSICS can be expressed, while any posting on matters unrelated to SSICS should not occur in any forum while representing SSICS.

The Internet Is a Public Space

Consider everything you post to the internet the same as anything you would post to a physical bulletin board or submit to a newspaper. Many eyes may fall upon your words or images including those of media, consumers, your manager and funders and everyone connected with them. Assume that all of these people will be reading every post, no matter how obscure or secure the site to which you are posting may seem.

Search engines and other technologies make it virtually impossible to take something back. No matter the privacy settings, all material can be printed and copied by individuals who are privy to the information. Consider everything to be completely public and permanent. Be sure you mean what you say and say what you mean.

Consider the worst-case scenario of the wrong person reading your post. All posting should be beyond reproach on that basis.

Representing SSICS

No SSICS employees who is not designated by their manager may publish or comment via social media in any way that suggests they are doing so in connection with Salt Spring Community Services. Salt Spring Community Services employees who are designated are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. Such employees are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as a Salt Spring Community Services employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal social media on topics unrelated to Salt Spring Community Services).

Before engaging in work related social media, employees must obtain the permission of their direct manager. Social media identities, logon ID's and user names should not use the 'Salt Spring Community Services' name without prior approval.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that Salt Spring Community Services employees must otherwise follow.

Respect Confidentiality

Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our current projects, future projects, financial information, research, and organizational information. Keep topics focused to matters of public record.

Foremost confidentiality pertains to any information with regard to the identity or any information of clients, consumers, service users, colleagues or anyone other than yourself. Avoid identifying anyone associated with SSICS (clients, employees, ex-employees, board members or ex-board members) or describing anyone in a way that makes them identifiable.

Service users, partners or suppliers should not be cited or obviously referenced. Never identify a consumer or service user, partner or supplier by name and never discuss details of a consumer engagement.

It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying generalities so long as the information provided does not violate any other confidentiality agreements or make it easy for someone to identify the client.

Protect Your Own Privacy

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the Salt Spring Community Services website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

Be Honest

We believe in transparency and honesty. Be honest about who you are as an employee of SSICS without giving out detailed personal information.

Respect Copyright Laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Mind Your Manners

Refrain from anything that can be construed as disrespectful. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Avoid arguments or inflammatory debates.

Use your best judgment and err on the side of caution.

Avoid Controversial Issues

If you see misrepresentations made about Salt Spring Community Services in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid engaging in debate.

If you spot a potential issue and believe an official response is warranted, bring it to the attention of management before it reaches a crisis situation.

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If someone takes issue with something you post (such as their copyrighted material or something they consider derogatory), deal with it quickly and remove it immediately.

When in Doubt, Ask

The speed of being able to publish is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, or ask someone else to look at it first. If you have any question about what is appropriate, play it smart and check with a member of the Communications team or management before posting.