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		POLICY: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Policy Purpose

This policy is intended to provide employees, volunteers and supporters of the YMCA of Brisbane and Y-Care South East Queensland Inc. (hereinafter the YMCA) with clarity on the use of social media platforms.

1.1 Policy Scope

Social media is online media that allows for interaction and/or participation. Examples include:

- Social networking and micro-blogging sites like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Bebo, Foursquare, Tumblr and Pinterest
- Video and photo sharing sites like Flickr and YouTube
- Online forums and discussion blogs, including web feeds and any other website or service identified as providing social networking services and/or functionality.

1.2 Audience

This social media policy applies to all people who work, volunteer or represent the YMCA

2. Background

The YMCA is seeking to develop a presence across a range of social media channels, both at the Association Office and Centre level. These channels are used as additional communication and promotion tools to complement our existing communication and marketing avenues.

Predominantly social media is to be used to provide YMCA employees, volunteers, supporters, and the general public with:

- Educational information
- Program and organisation updates and information
- Community interaction
- An avenue for the public to support YMCA, while also learning about the organisation, our services, resources and campaigns.

This policy aims to establish a process by which YMCA's official social media interactions can be managed with the best interests of YMCA's brand and reputation in mind.

This policy also sets out expected behaviour for people who do not officially represent YMCA on social media, but could, through their behaviour, impact on the reputation of YMCA, our Brand and our services. While Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are the predominant social media channels used by YMCA, this protocol may be applied in a common sense way to other social media channels used by employees, volunteers and supporters, or by the organisation in the future.

3. Definitions

3.1 Social Media

For the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as *'any conversation or activity that occurs online, where people can share information or data that might impact on YMCA or the people who use our services.'*

3.2 Official use

Official use is when an employee, volunteer or supporter is using social media as a representative of YMCA with permission from their Centre or Group Manager.

An alternative definition is when an employee or volunteer is posting from a social media account that is labelled as an official 'YMCA' account, i.e. not a distinct individual person. Posts from these 'YMCA' accounts must:

- Comply with YMCA's values and the guiding principles stipulated within section four (4) of this policy
- Do no harm
- Not promote individual staff and/or volunteer businesses or money making ventures, or individual political candidates, preferences or Parties

3.3 Personal use

Personal use is when an employee, volunteer or supporter is using social media as themselves, not officially representing the YMCA organisation. When operating on social media for personal use, employees, volunteers and supporters must make clear that any views expressed, are their own, and not those of the YMCA. While the YMCA does not seek to limit the ability of employees, volunteers and supporters to express themselves when operating on social in a personal capacity, it is necessary for them to be conscious of the ability for them to be linked back to the YMCA. In extreme cases, online commentary, even when made in a personal capacity, can be damaging to the organisation, and the YMCA reserves the right to take management action if this occurs.

4. Guiding principles

Whenever YMCA employees, volunteers or supporters are interacting on social media, whether in an official or personal capacity, the following guiding principles should be top of mind.

- I will not criticise clients, colleagues, YMCA or related Government policy
- I will not disclose confidential or personal information about the YMCA, its staff or its members
- I will respond to others' opinions respectfully and professionally
- I will not do anything that breaches my terms of employment
- I will not harass, bully or intimidate
- I will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly
- I will disclose conflicts of interest where I am able
- I will not knowingly post inaccurate information
- I will link to online references and original source materials directly
- I will be polite, considerate, kind and fair
- I will always ensure my activity does no harm
- I will champion YMCA and its services
- I will at all times act in a manner which promotes child safety and ensures their dignity and rights will be respected at all times

5. Identification

Identification is defined, for the purpose of this policy, as ‘how a social media bio, post, tweet, account, blog or page description identifies that particular social media channel as being affiliated with the YMCA.’

5.1 Naming conventions

All uses of the YMCA trademark online and in social media must be differentiated based on geographical location to ensure the public can find and obtain information most relevant to them.

For example, Facebook:

- YMCA Springfield Lakes Community Centre
- YMCA Victoria Point

Twitter:

- @YMCA_Brisbane

5.2 Official accounts

An official account (being it a blog, webpage, twitter account, Facebook page etc.) that represents YMCA should stipulate this within its bio, page or account description. An official social media page must be sanctioned by the Chief Executive Officer.

The account must carry the following, or a version of the following, words. “This is the official account/page for YMCA Victoria Point” followed by a brief description of centre/program and the purpose of the account relating to the particular social media platform. For example, on Facebook, it might say “YMCA Victoria Point is a Fitness, Aquatics and Sports centre and uses this account to promote health and well-being information and program details with the community”.

6. Permissions

6.1 Association Head Office

YMCA’s Head Office is responsible for all official use of social media as defined in 3.1.

6.2 Centres

The Centre Manager has delegation for all official Social Media activity undertaken by the Centre. The Centre Manager is thereby delegated the responsibility for operation of authorised social media platforms delivered in the centre’s name. Centre Managers have a responsibility to ensure that social media is maintained, that best practice is used, and that relevant staff are adequately trained to use the medium effectively.

6.3 Personal use

Individuals who are employees, volunteers or supporters of YMCA do not have permission to post official YMCA content. They can, however, repost, retweet etc. YMCA posts, material or comment without substantial or meaningful change as part of showing their affiliation or support for the organisation.

Personal use as defined in 3.3 is up to the individual employee, volunteer or supporter, however, individuals are accountable for the consequences of their actions on social media, and will be disciplined according to the YMCA’s Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying Policy (HRM002) and/or Professional Code of Conduct Policy (HRM025).

The personal use of social media platforms during work times is strictly prohibited.

Alan Bray
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

7. Inappropriate use

Examples of behaviour not permitted include, but are not limited to:

- Employees are not permitted to 'befriend' or post any comments/messages to any child or young person (under 18 years) who is an employee or participant of any YMCA program. Should an employee have a personal relationship (including a family relationship) with a child in a YMCA program or employee under the age of 18 years, the employee is required to have parental permission for this 'friendship' in writing and to provide a copy of this permission to their manager. The manager must keep this permission on the employees file.
- Employees are not permitted under any circumstances to post or in any way distribute images of children on any official or unofficial YMCA sites, pages on any social media platforms. The only exception to this will be where the CEO has provided written consent and approval in advance to authorised persons.
- No comments/posts/tweets are permitted to be made on any social networking site that may bring disrepute or negative publicity to any YMCA service or program.
- No comments are permitted to be made on a social networking site to or about another YMCA employee in any manner that may be constituted as workplace bullying, harassment, discrimination, slander or defamation of character.
- No employee is permitted to place confidential YMCA information, intellectual property, photographs (including of children and young people) or comments from a private or public conversation that is related to the workplace and/or occurred at the workplace on a social media site at any time.
- Conducting a private business on YMCA's social media presence
- Using discriminatory, defamatory, abusive or otherwise objectionable language
- Accessing or uploading pornographic, gambling or illegal content, including extreme images of graphic content (violence, blood and gore etc) or information regarding activity relating to firearms, bombs, terrorism etc.
- Accessing sites that promote hatred or extreme/fundamental beliefs and values
- Hacking or attempting to infiltrate the systems of YMCA or another organisation
- Activity that interferes with work commitments
- Activity that uses excessive bandwidth, either uploading or downloading, within the YMCA IT network
- Paid endorsement of any kind, including in kind services or gifts
- Activity that brings YMCA or the person's professionalism or ability to act in a professional manner into disrepute
- Employees must not engage in conduct which amounts to wilful or deliberate behaviour by an employee that is inconsistent with the continuation of the contract of employment;
- Employees must not engage in conduct which conduct that causes actual, perceived or potential serious and imminent risk to: the health or safety of a person; or the reputation, viability or profitability of the employer's business.

All YMCA employees agree that during their term of employment outside of working hours they shall not, at any time, under any circumstances whatsoever, place, respond, provide or in any other manner cause information in relation to the YMCA, the YMCA's clients, children or other confidential information to become published via Social Networking Media. This includes, but is not limited to, conversations that take place about their employment and during their employment that are provided to a third party that results in the publication on Social Networking Media.

It is the duty of everyone who is affiliated with YMCA to alert either the Centre Manager or Marketing Coordinator, to any inappropriate content they may come across.

8. Policy Breach

Employees should be aware that any information placed on social media sites is not legally considered private opinion, regardless of privacy settings. Employees should exercise common sense and sound judgement when using social networking environments.

Misuse of social media can have serious consequences for YMCA, and consequently that misuse can have serious consequences in terms of disciplinary action for staff and volunteers. Activities by employees and volunteers which breach this Policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you including possible criminal or civil prosecution or termination of your employment.

9. Complaints through social media

Complaints or negative comments regarding YMCA will be made through social media channels. Both official and personal users of social media are not permitted to engage in arguing or refuting complaints or negative feedback through social media channels. This behaviour can antagonise or fuel further attacks on YMCA's services, brand and/or reputation.

In the event of a complaint or negative comment about YMCA it is important to address the comment as soon as possible through the appropriate YMCA representative (e.g. Centre Manager).

10. Deleting posts

Social media is fluid, two-way, busy and often self-regulating. Social media can be used to disseminate information, but should be considered a form of two-way communication and a vehicle to listen to the 'wider' community views.

Organisations that heavily control content on their social media pages, blogs and accounts, mostly through the deletion of questionable or disapproving content, significantly reduce the impact, and usefulness, of social media as a channel for information distribution.

YMCA will not delete posts that are complaints, or negative, except when they breach any of the conditions outlined for employees, volunteer and supporters in the 'inappropriate use' section seven (7) above. Where possible, the administrator will contact the user whose post has been removed, providing them with an explanation why it has been removed and the necessary action(s) for it to be reposted.