



NSW Social Media Policy 2018

Version Control

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APPENDIX 1: [ONLINE] SOCIAL MEDIA REQUEST FORM

Related Policy

- NSW Media Policy and Procedures 2018

Employees should also refer to the Code of Conduct, particularly the sections on professionalism and confidentiality.

1. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY RATIONALE

1.1 About this policy

Social media refers to digital and online spaces where content can be added, posted or uploaded.

This policy applies to all St Vincent de Paul Society NSW (Society) employees, members and volunteers. If you use social media as part of your work, are officially accredited to represent the Society in social media, or are discussing the Society or Vinnies-related issues in your personal use of social media platforms, you must comply with this policy.

It applies to all channels and to content and editorial comments produced by staff, members or volunteers across all social media platforms that make reference to the Society.

User interaction and engagement with social media forums must comply with this policy and be conducted within the guidelines described in this document.

1.2 The Need for a Social Media Policy

The Society's social media activity is centrally coordinated to deliver the best experience and to protect and enhance the Society's reputation. This is because, however well-meaning the intention, a thoughtless remark or a poorly-judged image on social media can expose the Society to several complex risks. At best these lead to a burden on staff time; and at worst can damage our reputation and our ability to do our work of assisting people in need.

The Social Media Policy establishes a course of action aimed at managing the risks to the Society and our reputation inherent in the use of social media. We must also consider the potential impacts on our volunteers and members, our donors and partners, and the people we assist. It protects users to the extent allowable within existing legislation.

1.3 Common social media

The most common platforms include:

- External and internal social networking sites e.g. Facebook (pages, profiles and groups), Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram;
- Video and photo sharing websites e.g. YouTube, Flickr;
- Weblogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications;
- Forums and discussion boards e.g. Asana, Basecamp, Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups;

The below should also be considered as social media tools that Vinnies staff, members and volunteers might use and interact with:

- Online encyclopaedias and other interactive 'wiki'-type sites e.g. Wikipedia;
- Bulletin boards and podcasts;
- Any other websites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools or allow public comment e.g. online newspapers.

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Always think about how a post you make on social media might affect others. The more social media sites, comments, posts and images, the more the risk they could be misinterpreted or used against Vinnies.

Be professional, use good judgment, and be accurate and honest in your communications on social media. If you'd think twice about saying it to someone face to face, for example, please don't say it in public on social media.

2.1 Official Platforms

We are actively involved in the below authorised online communities and social media platforms: ¹

- facebook.com/VinniesAU and facebook.com/VinniesNSW
- Twitter handles @vinniesAust and @vinniesNSW
- Instagram @VinniesNSW
- LinkedIn [<https://www.linkedin.com/company/1589711/>]

The Communications team manages official online communities and social media platforms. All services and Central Councils should actively engage with the main official Society platforms, pages and sites and can request content to be posted as appropriate. All posts to the Society's official State-level platforms will require approval from the Communications team, please contact the Communications team via at social.nsw@vinnies.org.au.

Individual councils, conferences, services, shops or staff, or individual members or volunteers, must not create their own Society social media presence without specific authorisation from the Communications team. Such unauthorised presences can expose the Society to unacceptable risk in the public eye.

An exception is the ability for each Central Council to establish one official Facebook profile for their Central Council area. The establishment of these pages need to be done in conjunction with the Communications team.

An 'unofficial Society presence' comprises publicly-available presences claiming to represent the Society or identified by names and logos associated with the Society. This includes, but is not restricted to: Facebook pages, profiles and groups; Twitter, Instagram or YouTube profiles.

Staff, members and volunteers are encouraged to refer to the Society in their LinkedIn and other professional networking profiles, but not to make public posts or articles directly referring to the Society's policy or advocacy views without authorisation.

As of 1 July 2018, any pre-existing Society social media accounts that have not received previous approval, held by individual services, or sub-units should either be closed or managers should apply for specific authorisation from the Executive Director, Fundraising and Communications.

¹ As of 1 July 2018

2.2 Appropriate Content on Society Social Media

While authorised administrators and editors on authorised Vinnies social media accounts are encouraged to create their own content according to the needs of their particular target audiences, please keep the Vincentian key values of commitment, compassion, respect, integrity, empathy, advocacy and courage in mind.

Consequently, the following should be avoided:

- Content of a risqué or a sexual nature;
- Content that may offend people on the basis of their creed, ethnic or social background, health, gender, political opinions or sexual orientation;
- Content that may be considered slanderous or defamatory.

In addition social media accessible to the public should not feature quotes from or photographs of people we assist without their explicit consent via a media consent form.

2.3 Referring to the Society in Personal Social Media

If you refer to Society people, services or competitors in a personal capacity on social media, it should be clear that you are not representing the Society. However, for transparency, you should identify yourself as a Society employee, member or volunteer.

For example, you might write: “Views are not held or representative of my employer”. The best policy however is not to make any personal commentary on an issue or item that is directly or indirectly related to the work of the Society, or that may directly or indirectly be seen as a criticism of the Society or any of its policies.

Only authorised social media accounts can use the Society logo and name.

2.4 Posting and Commenting on Social Media

In order to protect yourself and the Society’s reputation, you should:

- Be professional, use good judgment and be accurate and honest in your communications. As stated above, if you’d think twice about saying it out loud to someone you respect, for example, please don’t say it in public on social media;
- Errors, omissions or unprofessional language or behaviour reflect poorly on the Society and may result in liability for you or the Society;
- Be respectful and courteous to and about fellow employees, business partners, competitors and the people we assist;
- Ensure that your social media commentary does not contain material that would be deemed offensive by the average person; nor should it contain commentary or content that conflicts with the Society’s views on a range of social justice matters.²
- Ensure that your social media activity does not interfere with your work commitments.

² The official Social Justice Statement 2014 can be found online here:
https://www.vinnies.org.au/icms_docs/210410_Vinnies_Social_Justice_Statement.pdf

2.5 Managing Your Interactions on Social Media

- Under no circumstances should your personal social media name, handle and URL include the Society's name or logo unless it is a centrally authorised account used for posting official Society material.
- The Society strongly discourages 'friending' of the people we assist on social media websites. Staff in frontline roles, members or volunteers should not initiate or accept friend requests with the people we assist.
- The Society discourages staff in management/supervisory roles from initiating 'friend' requests with employees they manage.
 - While managers/supervisors may accept friend requests if initiated by the employee, if the manager/supervisor does believe it will negatively impact the work relationship, it is not recommended.
 - An exception is contact requests in professional networking sites such as LinkedIn.
- Contacting / friending / engaging with children and young people who are clients of the Society by employees, conference members and volunteers on social media is strictly prohibited.
- Using photographs / videos of children / young people on social media that are indecent, offensive or demeaning to any person; contain personal details for example full names, personal contact information or uniforms that identify location
- All images of children and young people must have parental consent including timeframe, and proposed distribution and use.
- Any approved and consented images of children must be stored on a SVDP secure server with limited access. Images must not be shared via personal devices or outside of work perimeters. Sharing of images of young people outside of these perimeters would be in serious breach of the Society's Code of Conduct.
- The Society does not publicly endorse commercial products, services and organisations – including those with which we have formal partnerships. Official Society accounts should not therefore be used to provide blanket endorsements of any organisation or person, though we can 'like', share or favourably comment on posts that we agree with.
- The Society expects that no employee, member or volunteer would use social media to discredit, criticise, defame or share confidential information about the Society. Any damaging breach undertaken by an individual employee, member or volunteer could result in disciplinary action.

APPENDIX 1: [ONLINE] SOCIAL MEDIA REQUEST [WEB FORM]

Name and email	
Department/Service/Central Council	
Manager approving this request	
Information/message for social posts (recommended under 75 words for Facebook; maximum 280 characters for Twitter, recommended under 200)	
Will you require a designer to create content for your campaign/event?	Y/N
Which Vinnies NSW social media platforms do you want your message posted on?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Twitter • Instagram • LinkedIn
Date post/s required	
Do you have a photo or video to be included?	Please provide link or attach high res, good quality photo.
Have media consent forms been completed for photos?	Please attach the form.
Please insert links to webpage/s to be included.	
Please insert relevant organisations' social media pages to be tagged	
Would you be willing to pay to boost your post and improve your reach? This is possible for as little as \$30.	
Is your post content relevant for Vinnies website or YouTube Channel?	
Would you like your story to be used in a media release or in a Vinnies publication like Vision?	

Please complete this form and email it to social.nsw@vinnies.org.au