

## **North Kent Mind- Social Media Policy – Policy 26**

### **1. Purpose of policy**

This policy is intended to help employees of North Kent Mind make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Google+ and LinkedIn. Other social media includes but is not exclusive to blogs, video, picture blogging and audio.

This policy outlines the standards North Kent Mind requires staff to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which North Kent Mind will monitor your use of social media and the action that will be taken in respect of breaches of this policy. The principles of this policy apply to use of social media regardless of the method used to access it - it covers static and mobile IT/computer equipment, as well as work and/or personal smartphones etc.

### **2. Who is covered by the policy**

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers.

### **3. Why use social media**

Social media enables us to attract new clients, recruit for missions or events or to seek feedback on key services.

### **4. Responsibility for implementation of the policy**

The CEO has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.

All staff are responsible for their own compliance with this policy and for ensuring that it is consistently applied. All staff should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any breach of this policy should be reported to Justin Bateman.

Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to Justin Bateman.

The organisation will take responsibility regarding images of staff/ services users being posted on social media seeking the appropriate permissions first.

### **5. Using work-related social media**

Only the personnel responsible to update in the public domain are permitted to post material on a social media website in the company's name and behalf. Anyone who breaches this restriction will face the company's disciplinary procedure.

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Approved social media websites for North Kent Mind are Face book, Twitter, Linked In, North Kent Mind website, job related sites. This list may be updated by CEO/Deputy CEO.

Before using work-related social media you must:

- have read and understood this policy and employees hand book ; and
- have sought and gained prior written approval to do so from CEO / Deputy CEO.

The roles and functions which will be needed moving forward have been identified as follows:

Tweeting North Kent Mind news

Advertising promotions on Facebook.

Public updates- leaflets/North Kent Mind website

## **6. Personal use of social media**

Personal use of social media in the workplace is permitted, subject to certain conditions, as detailed below. It must not be abused or overused and the company reserves the right to withdraw permission at any time.

The following conditions must be met for personal use to continue:

- use must be minimal and take place substantially outside of normal working hours, for example, breaks, lunchtime
- use must not interfere with business or office commitments
- use must comply with our policies including the Equal Opportunities Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy, Data Protection Policy and Disciplinary Procedure
- NKM equipment - laptops/ i pads shouldn't be used to access social media under any circumstances, for example Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram as that equipment isn't adequately protected against viruses.

You are also personally responsible for what you communicate on social media sites **outside the workplace**, for example at home, in your own time, using your own equipment. You must always be mindful of your contributions and what you disclose about the company. For further details, see Point 7, 'General rules for social media use' below.

## **7. General rules for social media use**

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Whenever you are permitted to use social media in accordance with this policy, you must adhere to the following general rules. The same rules would also apply when using social media outside of work:

- Do not post or forward a link to any abusive, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory, defamatory or inappropriate content.
- A member of staff who feels that they have been harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted by a colleague onto a social media website should inform Justin Bateman.
- Never disclose commercially sensitive, anti-competitive, private or confidential information. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with Justin Bateman
- Do not post material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights.
- Be honest and open, but be mindful of the impact your contribution might make to people's perceptions of the company.
- You are personally responsible for content you publish – be aware that it will be public for many years.
- When using social media for personal use, use a disclaimer, for example: 'The views expressed are my own and don't reflect the views of my employer'. Be aware though that even if you make it clear that your views on such topics do not represent those of the organisation, your comments could still damage our reputation.
- To keep personal social media accounts private and secure, using site settings, or use a different name so clients are unable to identify you, and contact or view your personal media accounts.
- You should avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly.
- Do not post anything that your colleagues or our customers, clients, business partners, suppliers or vendors would find offensive, insulting, obscene and/or discriminatory.
- If you have disclosed your affiliation as an employee of our organisation you must ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you present to client and colleagues.

## **8. Monitoring use of social media**

Staff should be aware that any use of social media websites (whether or not accessed for work purposes) may be monitored and, where breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken under the company's employee's handbook.

The company reserves the right to restrict or prevent access to certain social media websites if personal use is considered to be excessive. Monitoring is only carried out

to the extent permitted or as required by law and as necessary and justifiable for business purposes.

Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability against you and the company.

If you notice any use of social media by other members of staff in breach of this policy please report it to Justin Bateman.

Where it is believed that an employee has failed to comply with this policy, they will face the company's disciplinary procedure. If the employee is found to have breached the policy, they will face a disciplinary penalty ranging from a verbal warning to dismissal.

The penalty applied will depend on factors such as the seriousness of the breach; the nature of the posting; the impact it has had on the organisation or the individual concerned; whether the comments cause problems given the employee's role; whether the employer can be identified by the postings; other mitigating factors such as the employee's disciplinary record etc. Remember the same test of reasonableness applies when dismissing for improper use of social media as it would for any other misconduct dismissal.

The CEO has overall responsibility for the review and update of this policy at the beginning of each year or more regularly as required.

## **9. Agreement**

All company employees, contractors or temporary staff are required to sign this agreement confirming their understanding and acceptance of this policy.

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