



AHA Social Media Policy – PUBLIC

As of 2/26/2021

POLICY PURPOSE

This policy describes how the American Hospital Association (AHA or Association) makes use of Social Media and how AHA employees manage AHA-branded Social Media accounts.

DEFINITIONS

“Social Media” refers to a website or platform that allows the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube and any AHA-affiliated internal or external online community platforms.

SCOPE

In fulfilling the AHA’s mission and vision, the AHA uses Social Media to build relationships with the health care field, the media and the public. Our use of Social Media enables the AHA to communicate with and educate our various audiences about health care issues and trends as they affect hospitals and health systems, and to ensure that the perspectives and needs of the health care field are clearly articulated and understood.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

A. ENSURING CIVIL DISCOURSE OVER SOCIAL MEDIA

The AHA uses Social Media to create a dialogue about issues that affect the health care field and welcomes, as part of that dialogue, anyone with any interest in discussing these issues in a civil and respectful manner. At the same time, the AHA does not tolerate Social Media dialogue that does not conform to the reasonable standards of civility outlined in this policy. We reserve the right to take appropriate actions – including blocking any user, ending any communication with a blocked user, or involving proper law enforcement authorities if necessary – against dialogue participants who fail to observe the following guidelines on civil discourse:

1. All AHA employees are expected to conduct online interactions in accordance with the same values, ethics, confidentiality and other AHA policies that apply to employee off-line conduct, including this policy. As we all represent the AHA, whether in the office or out, we must always be aware of the impact our professional and personal online interactions may have on the AHA brand.
2. AHA accepts responsibility for the content it posts on its Social Media sites and will not impersonate, mislead or purposely obscure the Association’s identity when using Social Media. Social Media is about enhancing the Association’s credibility and reputation. The AHA also expects participants in dialogue on our Social Media sites to refrain from impersonating, misleading or purposely obscuring their identities.

3. AHA protects its own intellectual property and respects the intellectual property of others. We will not intentionally use copyrighted material without permission or use others' business name, logo or other trademark-protected materials in a manner that may mislead or confuse others with regard to the business's brand or business affiliation. The AHA also expects that participants in dialogue on our Social Media sites display the same respect for the intellectual property of the AHA and others. We will respond to clear and complete notices of alleged copyright or trademark infringement.
4. AHA respects antitrust laws and does not use its Social Media sites to improperly coordinate discussions between market participants about prices, salaries, expansion plans, market allocation, refusals to deal or other anti-competitive practices.
5. AHA recognizes the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of an individual's personal and medical data and we will not include, reference or reveal such personal data in dialogue on our Social Media sites. We expect participants in the dialogue on our Social Media sites to similarly respect confidentiality and to refrain from including, referring to or revealing individuals' personal or medical data.
6. AHA accepts differences and differing opinions about health care issues affecting the health care field and we strive to maintain a courteous, polite and professional dialogue about these issues even when we might disagree with opinions expressed by others. AHA expects that participants in dialogue on the Association's Social Media sites also will accept differences and differing opinions by responding in a respectful way when they disagree or have a difference of opinion.
7. AHA does not use Social Media to bully, intimidate or threaten others and we expect participants in dialogues on the Association's Social Media sites to refrain from bullying, intimidation and threatening harm or violence to anyone, including threats directed to the Association or any of its employees.
8. AHA does not use Social Media to defame the reputation of others and we will not tolerate the use of the Association's Social Media sites by any dialogue participants in order to defame the reputation of the Association, any individuals or groups of individuals or any organization or business entity.
9. AHA does not publish or post profanity or obscene or pornographic communications on its Social Media sites. We do not tolerate the use of profanity or posting obscene or pornographic images by any participants in the dialogue on the Association's Social Media sites, whether in a user profile or background or in a response, comment or message posting.
10. AHA intends that Social Media serve as an effective communications tool for the Association and will refrain from spamming and other abusive uses of the Social Media technology/capability. We expect that participants in dialogue on the Association's Social Media sites will properly use the technology/capabilities as an effective communications tool and will not engage in spam or other misuse of these technologies/capabilities.

***AHA reserves the right to eliminate, change or modify policies at any time.**