

North West Residential Support Services Inc.  
Policies & Procedures  
**GUIDE TO SAFE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

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**As for the people you are paid to support:**

You are not to post photos and texts of, or about the people you are paid to support unless they are in control of their own affairs and give you express permission to share social media with you.

All of the following warnings on social media should be heeded.

Any social media exchanges that in any way embarrasses, discredit or concern NWRSS will be the subject of disciplinary action for irresponsibility.

**As for your personal friendships and co-workers:**

We have all heard stories of people being accidentally “caught out” and embarrassed after posting something online without thinking. Our social media policy and this guide are designed to help prevent you from being that person.

The Fair Work Commission has made numerous decisions supporting an employer to deal with employees who abuse social media in the workplace. We want to make sure you are not the next person in that situation.

**Do not be the next Facebook fail!**

Of course, you are free to use social media in your life outside work, but as soon as it becomes work related you may be risking your job if you muck it up.

Here are some important points to help you:

**There is no such thing as privacy on the web!**

Although most social media sites allow you to control which of your friends can access your personal information and comments, you have no control over what your friends do with it. Your privacy is only as good as that of your friends’ (and their friends friends, and their friends friends friends...)

**Once you post something on social media you lose all control of it!**

Before you post something that is work related take a second or two to think about what you are posting. That’s all it takes – a few seconds to think:

- Would I be happy saying these things directly to my manager’s face?

- This seems really funny to me but would it be hurting anyone by making this post?
- Is it possible for people to use my post to identify someone else? You might not use names but sometimes when more than one post from different people are added together it is obvious to all who the post is about. Especially if that person is a client
- Am I being fair and respectful?
- If I want to post private details or photographs of other people (especially clients), particularly if they are embarrassing, have I asked the other person's permission?
- Am I treating other people the same way I would like them to treat me?

**Posting on line is no different to posting in a newspaper or on a telegraph pole!**

Once posted, it is in the public domain and anyone can read or look at it. Worse than that, anyone can repost it and you have lost all control of your "private" actions.

**Your private life and your work life are not the same!**

You learn things at work that should never be put in the public domain because they have a very real ability to unfairly offend, humiliate, intimidate, insult or ridicule other people, including clients and workmates. If you have concerns about the way someone is treated at work we have formal ways to deal with that, or you can seek external advice. Social media is not the place to air concerns about the workplace.

Using social media is fun and a great way to keep in touch with friends and workmates. Remember these points and you will go a very long way towards ensuring that you do not breach our expectations of you regarding privacy and proper practice when using it.

Here are two real life examples of employees who failed to understand the reach social media has.

The first employee forgot that they had friended their boss on Facebook with understandable results:

Facebook post – *My boss is such a jerk! He is selfish, low life prune that doesn't deserve me.*

Boss's reply post – *I completely agree, I don't deserve you. You have 12 hours to clear out your office, and clock out for the last time. Talk to me tomorrow about getting your last pay cheque.*

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