



Care
Education
Advocacy

Social Media Guidelines

1. PURPOSE

To advise on the conduct expected when creating and engaging with Sexual Health Victoria (SHV) social media sites and on the general use of social media where there is an identifiable connection with SHV.

2. SCOPE

These Guidelines are applicable to all employees, contractors (temporary or otherwise), students, visitors and volunteers, and should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct. Everyone is required to understand their obligations as representatives of the organisation and that their actions and comments can impact the organisation or individuals concerned.

SHV respects the individual's right to use social networking sites as a medium for personal communication and self-expression. However, SHV requires that everyone doing so ensures that the interests of co-workers and the reputation of, and the organisation are protected at all times.

3. WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is online media designed to allow information to be shared, disseminated and created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media services include, but are not limited to:

- social and professional networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Bebo, Yammer), including official and unofficial pages on social and professional networking sites that are set up by individuals, groups, clubs and societies
- geo-spatial tagging sites (e.g. FourSquare)
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- micro-blogging sites (e.g. Twitter)
- video and photo sharing sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- vodcasting and podcasting sites
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second Life)
- instant messaging (including SMS)

These Guidelines cover all future social media platforms and methods of accessing social media sites, and apply to:

- individuals authorised to use Social Networking Platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc) during work hours
- those who publish content to social media sites regarding SHV or connected to SHV
- the employees or stakeholders for SHV.

Obligations to comply with these Guidelines remain relevant whether the use of social media and Social Networking Platforms occurs within or outside of the workplace or inside or outside an individual's hours of work. These Guidelines equally apply to any personal blogs operated by individuals.

4. BEST PRACTICE IN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

The list below provides general behaviour standards when engaging with social media:

- a) **Be responsible for what you write:** SHV and its representatives need to take responsibility for what they write; exercise good judgment and common sense.
- b) **Be accurate and timely:** provide accurate information on time as this is expected from the audience; do not publish misleading information.
- c) **Be respectful:** be professional and respectful at all times, as this can directly reflect on the individual posting the message and/or SHV, its reputation and its voice.
- d) **Follow:** the conversations to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to the community.
- e) **Recognise that online content can and will live forever:** be aware that the internet is not anonymous and acts as a permanent record. Everything written on the web may be traced back to its author even after it has been deleted. Information is backed up often and repeatedly, and posts in one forum are usually replicated in others through trackbacks and reposts or references.
- f) **Separate personal from the professional:** there is no clear line between an individual's work life and personal life. One should always be honest and respectful in both capacities. Finding the actual identity of a person from a few posts and a screen name is not impossible. This creates an avenue for outside parties to link personal writings to those a person has done in a professional capacity. Individuals should always write keeping in mind that other people may know their identify and it is not anonymous. They should never write anything that they would not say openly to all parties involved.
- g) **Avoid hazardous materials:** refrain from posting or linking to any materials that are defamatory, threatening, harassing, indecent, discriminatory, infringe copyright, constitute a contempt of court, or are otherwise unlawful.
- h) **Keep confidentiality:** refrain from posting any confidential or proprietary information.
- i) **Be aware of privacy obligations:** these should always be considered prior to posting information on any forum of social media, especially if the identity of an individual can be ascertained from the information provided. Personal information gained through employment with SHV should not be posted in social media.
- j) **Identify, if appropriate:** when relevant, individuals should identify their affiliation with SHV and their area of specialisation.
- k) **Consider you audience:** when using social media, remember that your readers include current clients, potential clients, current/past/future employees, key stakeholders and funders. Consider this before you publish and make sure you are not alienating any of these groups.

5. SEXUAL HEALTH VICTORIA OFFICIAL SOCIAL MEDIA

SHV uses social media to facilitate interaction between clients, employees, collaborators, parents, prospective clients, communities, friends and supporters, and for direct education, research and business purposes.

There are several official SHV social media presences, which have administrative and publishing restrictions on the creation and posting of content. These sites are managed on behalf of the organisation through the Marketing, Media and Communications team.

SHV encourages staff to engage with our official social media content and posts in line with these guidelines and in keeping with the mission and best interests of the organisation. We encourage staff to like, share and engage with our organisation on social media with the following principles in mind:

1. Encourage and advocate for improving the reproductive and sexual health literacy of the population
2. Keep your content and conversations informative (without preaching), but always tasteful and professional
3. Support the growth of our brand as experts in the field and always refer individuals to our approved services and medical professionals when they are seeking medical advice.

See also **Professional use of social media for authorisation to comment.**

6. OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA WITH A CONNECTION TO SEXUAL HEALTH VICTORIA

The use of social media by individuals who have a 'connection' with SHV are covered by this Policy in each of the following circumstances:

- If the social media site is established or used as a SHV social media site, including for education, research and collaboration purposes
- If the content of the social media is specifically about SHV or its employees, contractors, volunteers or students, in whole or in part; and/or
- If a person identifies themselves as being associated with SHV (e.g., as an employee or associate).

Individuals must read and observe the following before creating a social media presence that has a connection with SHV:

- a) Any social media site that intends to represent SHV in whole or in significant part must be registered and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
See also **Professional use of social media for authorisation to comment.**
- b) All social networking sites that represent SHV in whole or in part shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by SHV and shall have SHV contact information prominently displayed.
- c) If a non-official site utilises the SHV name under privilege, then the site must clearly state its purpose and relationship to SHV.
- d) Social media tools provided by SHV or those contracted through third party providers shall also clearly indicate their SHV affiliation, where technically possible.
- e) Where sites represent SHV, content owners are responsible for monitoring and maintaining web content in line with SHV's Style Guide. Guidance should be sought from Marketing, Media and Communications.
- f) SHV reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of these Guidelines.

7. PROFESSIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Individuals representing SHV in a professional capacity in social media must always conduct themselves as representatives of the organisation and in accordance with SHV Policies, Guidelines and Procedures. This includes disclosing themselves as an employee, contractor, volunteer or student of the organisation and using an approved official Social Media account. Conduct of employees, contractors, volunteers or students should be in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

7.1 Becoming authorised to comment

Before engaging in the use of social media as a representative of SHV, individuals must be authorised to comment. You may not comment as a representative of the organisation unless you are authorised

to do so. All health-related information must first be approved by a doctor or authorised nurse to ensure accuracy.

7.2 Rules of engagement

Once authorised to comment as a SHV representative, you must:

- disclose you are an employee, contractor, volunteer or student of the organisation, and use only your own identity, or an approved official account
- disclose and comment only on information classified as public domain information
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading, and complies with all relevant SHV policies
- ensure you are not the first to make an announcement (unless specifically given permission to do so)
- comment only on your area of expertise and authority
- ensure comments are respectful of the community in which you are interacting online
- adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws.

If you are authorised to comment as a SHV representative, you must not:

- post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order or is otherwise unlawful
- use or disclose any confidential or secure information
- make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the SHV's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

7.3 Moderation of SHV-produced social media

- The site owner must ensure a moderation process is clearly defined when inviting comments from the public on an official website or social media platform
- A disclaimer and acceptable use statement must be clearly stated on the social media site
- All official website activity (including any social media) must be approved by the Marketing, Media and Communications team.

8. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION OF THE ORGANISATION

Unless SHV provides prior written permission, SHV does not allow you to post, disclose or use confidential information of SHV or its clients or customers on any website or social media platform. Confidential information of SHV is information held or communicated in any manner, used or produced by SHV, whether or not marked as such, in the conduct of its business or relating to its financial affairs.

9. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF THE ORGANISATION

Individuals must not post any trademarks, proprietary information or other intellectual property of SHV or its clients or customers on any website or social media platform.

10. INFORMATION RELATING TO CLIENTS OR STAKEHOLDERS

Individuals must not refer to work that they or anyone else is undertaking at SHV in relation to clients or stakeholders of SHV. This includes references to clients, stakeholders/partners or specific projects SHV is engaged in. Conducting business with clients or customers is also prohibited through the posting of information on social networking sites.

11. CONTENT THAT DISPARAGES THE ORGANISATION, THOSE WHO WORK FOR IT AND EXTERNAL PARTIES

SHV's goodwill and client relationships are dependent upon its reputation. Individuals must not post any content that disparages or is likely to have a harmful effect on the reputation or business of SHV.

12. INAPPROPRIATE INFORMATION

Individuals must not use social networking sites at any time (whether during or outside work hours) to discriminate, harass, bully or victimise individuals internally or externally to SHV. Individuals must also make sure that they have read and understand any other SHV policies that may relate or refer to these behaviours.

13. SPOKESPEOPLE

The following individuals are authorised to act as 'spokespeople' for SHV, regarding an endorsed position on an issue and provide an institutional voice in content and comment on social media:

- The Board Chair
- Chief Executive Officer
- An appointed Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Director - Corporate Services
- Director – Service Delivery
- Medical Director
- Staff who have undertaken media training and have been delegated to do so by the CEO.

Additional communications to internal and external individuals regarding general matters such as events and education session times can be made via social media channels by authorised social media co-ordinators and Marketing, Media and Communications representatives (with prior approval of content); or senior representatives as nominated by the Chief Executive Officer.

Individuals who are considered an expert within a particular field are encouraged to engage in all media channels, including social media, particularly when news or social interest in the public domain has made their area of expertise topical and there is opportunity to make a valuable contribution to community discussion. (See Expert Comment below).

14. EXPERT COMMENT

SHV recognises and protects the concept and practice of freedom of opinion and expression as essential to the proper conduct of education, training and health care. This right carries with it the duty of individuals to comment in a manner consistent with a responsible and honest search for knowledge and truth, grounded in evidence.

Where members of the organisation offer public commentary, it is expected that the comments will correlate directly to the individual's area(s) of expertise. In these circumstances, individuals may use the SHV name and give the title of their position to establish their credentials. This does not restrict the right of an individual to freely express opinions in their private capacity as an individual member of society, but statements made in this context should not include the organisations name, or the title of the person's organisational appointment.

The above should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct.

15. MANAGING AND REPORTING ISSUES IN SOCIAL MEDIA

If a significant issue arises within social media, particularly one affecting or implicating SHV or its employees, the following steps are recommended:

- a) Identify the level of issue, those discussing the issue, the forums used and the extent of the commentary along with any legal ramifications.
- b) Follow the conversations to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is being discussed, but do not respond.
- c) Inform your manager or an Executive so that an assessment of the commentary can be made in relation accuracy / defamation / legal issues / organisational sensitivities.
- d) If a sensitive or negative issue is being discussed in a public or social media forum, responding can often inflame the issue by making the 'protestors' believe SHV is 'worried' about the discussion or that SHV will change a decision. Individuals should always consider the impact of their response in line with this policy before responding to ensure consistent messages, adherence to approval processes and sensitivities are considered.

Social media is also an extremely effective tool for dealing with crisis management to communicate swiftly and to a large network at short notice. Authorised spokespeople will engage with SHV's official social media administrators in the event of a crisis.

16. USE OF IMAGES AND / OR VIDEO

In most cases, prior permission (i.e. a release) must be obtained to post, share or distribute images of individuals whose images are identifiable. Always use content, such as photographs or videos obtained by SHV representatives specifically for the purpose of posting or distribution. General release forms for use of images and video are available. For advice, please contact Marketing, Media and Communications.

Nothing should be posted that might be embarrassing to another individual or that could be construed as placing an individual in a negative or false light. This includes content that might cause someone to believe that their name, image, likeness or other identifying aspect of their identity is being used, without permission, for commercial purposes.

Special care must always be taken when dealing with images of minors, clients or support groups. Stringent legal requirements apply. Generally speaking, such images should never be used for social media posting or distribution.

Most images and videos are subject to copyright and occasionally trademark, design and other intellectual property protection. Individuals should verify that their use of images and/or video is:

- a) covered by a relevant exception for education or research, or
- b) falls within explicit licence terms of the image or video, or
- c) that individuals have received copyright permission (as distinct from privacy clearance) to use the image or video in the way they propose.

17. CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THESE GUIDELINES

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include the termination of an individual's employment/placement.

SHV may request that you delete any information contained on any social media platform that is in breach of this policy.

SHV may restrict your access to certain social networking sites during work hours if you are found to be accessing social media unreasonably or excessively.

18. DATA BREACHES

A data breach is a serious situation where any personal (or other) information is leaked or released either intentionally or unintentionally.

If a breach occurs, the Data Breach Response Plan and Procedure will be immediately activated.

19. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Relevant Legislation

- Equal Opportunity Act, 2010 (Victoria)
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Victoria)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Victoria)
- Age Discrimination 2004 (Commonwealth)
- Sex Discrimination Act, 1984/4 (Commonwealth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
- Fair Work Act (2009)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act, 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
- Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 (Commonwealth)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Copyright Act 1968

Relevant Policies and Procedures

- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Guidelines
- Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Guidelines
- Grievance and Dispute Resolution Procedure
- Communication Technology and Information Technology Guidelines
- Code of Conduct
- Managing Unsatisfactory Performance Procedure
- Health Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- Hazard, Incident, Adverse Events Reporting and Investigating Procedure
- Termination of Employment Guidelines
- Data Breach Response Plan and Procedure

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