



## INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Overview:

The Center For Family Services has policies and procedures for governing the utilization and communication of information regarding staff access to the Internet for the purpose of using social networking and social media platforms.

### Policy:

This policy provides regulation for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

As is stated in the agency's "Computer Usage Policy", employees are generally not permitted to use the internet during work hours for personal reasons. This includes accessing social networking websites from any agency equipment, device, and/or computer or any personal devices while at work, for personal reasons.

### Procedure:

The following protocols apply to professional use of social media on behalf of the Center For Family Services as well as personal use of social media when referencing the Center For Family Services and/or when a representative of Center For Family Services.

1. Employees are responsible and accountable to know and adhere to CFS's Code of Conduct, Personnel Policies & Procedures Handbook, Guidelines for Daily Operations, and other company policies when using social media in reference to CFS.
2. Employees should not be on their personal social networks or social media platforms while on their work schedule, unless prior approval has been granted by their supervisor for work purposes.
3. Center For Family Services Staff should refrain from sharing confidential or private information about the agency's business operations, services, or clients; respect financial disclosure laws; and refrain from speaking for Center For Family Services without express written authorization from the agency.
4. Center For Family Services Staff should refrain from discussing work-related activities in personal blogs and on all social media platforms including Facebook profiles, Instagram accounts, LinkedIn profiles, and Twitter accounts. Discussing work-related activities, in some cases, may be violation of privacy laws as well as other regulations. Staff should not discuss confidential information within private messages on these sites.

5. Staff are prohibited from making false or defamatory statements about the agency, any of its employees, or its clients on personal and agency social networking sites.
6. Staff may not post pictures or other identifying information of clients, their families, or Center For Family Services staff on personal and agency social networking sites unless prior permission is granted. Prior permission must be obtained through the Public Relations department and with the use of the agency's Media Consent form.
7. Employees should not befriend or otherwise interact with current or former clients on their personal social networking websites. This is a clear violation of ethical standards and is strictly prohibited.
8. In most situations, staff does not maintain communication with former clients. If such communication is appropriate or deemed necessary, it must be with the knowledge and oversight of the supervisor. Staff is only permitted to correspond with current clients through agency email, phone, or in person; communication through social networking sites or personal email is prohibited. Professionally licensed employees should also review the ethical standards relating to the nature of interactions with former clients and the time frames relating to such interactions.
9. Employees should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their image, as well as CFS' image. The information that employees post or publish may be public information for a long time.
10. Employees should be aware that CFS may observe content and information that becomes available as posted by employees through social media. Employees should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to CFS, its employees, or clients, consumers, residents, etc. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
11. Should employees post inappropriate information on their personal social media platforms, *as described above*; employees will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. If CFS determines that such actions were egregious, immediate termination may be recommended.
12. Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct, while employed at CFS include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, slanderous, or that can create a hostile work environment.
13. Employees are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions, about what is considered confidential, employees should check with the Public Relations Department and/or their supervisor.

14. Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Employees should refer these inquiries to authorized CFS spokespersons.
15. If employees encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
16. Employees should get appropriate permission before they refer to or post images of current or former employees, members, vendors or suppliers. Additionally, employees should get appropriate permission to use a third party's copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks or other intellectual property.
17. Social media use should not interfere with employee's responsibilities at CFS. CFS' computer systems are to be used for business purposes only. When using CFS' computer systems, use of social media for business purposes is allowed (ex: Facebook, Twitter, CFS blogs and LinkedIn, but personal use of social media networks or personal blogging of online content is discouraged and could result in disciplinary action.
18. Subject to applicable law, after-hours online activity that violates CFS's Code of Conduct or any other company policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action or termination.
19. If employees publish content after-hours that involves work or subjects associated with CFS, a disclaimer should be used, such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and may not represent CFS's positions, strategies or opinions."
20. CFS requires all employees who are engaged in social networking and social media platforms to be respectful and courteous to all stakeholders, fellow associates, consumers, clients, vendors, suppliers, etc. At no time is disrespectful behavior, bullying, harassment, etc allowed while conducting agency business. All employees are to maintain appropriate culturally competent practices and refrain from activity that can be interpreted as discrimination on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law.
21. All employees are required to maintain agency confidentiality and HIPAA standards while engaged with social networking and social media platforms.

Tips and Guidelines to follow when using social media platforms:

As a Center For Family Services employee, you are viewed by our clients, partners, and other outside parties as a representative of Center For Family Services. Whether or not you specifically reference or discuss your work, your participation on social media platforms is a reflection on Center For Family Services.

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- Honor Our Differences. Center For Family Services will not tolerate discrimination (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected basis under federal, state, or local laws, regulations or ordinances).
- Social media is a place to have conversations and build connections, whether you're doing it for Center For Family Services or for yourself. The connections you'll make on social media will be much more rewarding if you remember to have conversations rather than push agendas.
- Everything you post online can be traced back to you, so be sure what you post is appropriate before you post it. Your post may be shared with others and archived even if you delete it later. Even if you put something in your bio about your content being just your own that may not stop someone else online from complaining about your activity and noting that you work for Center For Family Services.
- Be conscious when mixing your business and personal lives. Online, your personal and business personas are likely to intersect. Center For Family Services respects the free speech rights of all of its employees, but you must remember that clients, partners, colleagues and supervisors often have access to the online content you post. Keep this in mind when publishing information online that can be seen by more than friends and family, and know that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on. Remember NEVER to disclose non-public information of Center For Family Services (including confidential information), and be aware that taking public positions online that are counter to Center For Family Services interests might cause conflict.
- When in doubt, do not post.