



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

October 2019

At the First Methodist Church of Fort Worth Foundation, we know that online social platforms, including blogs, social networking services, message boards, and video and photo sharing websites, are constantly transforming the way we interact. We also recognize the importance of the Internet in shaping the public view of our organization. The Foundation is committed to supporting the staff's personal right to interact responsibly and knowledgeably on the Internet through blogging and interaction in social media. We want our staff to share and interact with others in order to build a valuable online community.

The purpose of these guidelines is two-fold: First, the Foundation has an aim to protect our interests, including, but not limited to, the privacy of our employees and confidentiality regarding our assets, plans, donors, partners, users, and operations. Second, these guidelines will help staff make respectful and appropriate decisions about work-related interactions with people on the Internet.

To Foundation Staff Members: Your personal online activity is your business. However, any activity in or outside of work that affects your performance, the performance of others at the Foundation, or the Foundation's interests are a proper focus for this Social Media Policy. You must always assume that your work-related social media activity is visible to the Foundation as well as current and potential employees, clients, partners, and prospects. The Foundation reserves the right to direct its staff to avoid certain subjects and remove inappropriate comments and posts. Any additional internal policies remain in effect in our workplace.

Guidelines for Discussing the Foundation on the Internet

- If potentially sensitive or negative conversations arise on a social platform of the Foundation, the Executive Director must be made aware and help formulate a proper response.
- Details about current Foundation assets as well as potential Foundation activities, employees, partners, or transactions may not be publicly posted without express permission of the Executive Director and/or, in some cases, the Board of Directors.
- Any posts credited to an individual staff member (versus using the "voice" of the Foundation) should include identification including name and, when appropriate, your role/title within the Foundation. In addition, use a disclaimer that "the views you express on the particular website are yours alone and do not necessarily represent the views of the Foundation."
- Support any statements made online with factual evidence, using links where appropriate.
- Before sharing any information from First United Methodist Church of Fort Worth (FUMC), permission must be obtained from the church's Director of Communications. This does not apply to sharing information already posted publicly by the church.

Additional Guidelines for Confidential and Proprietary Information

Information that is confidential and proprietary about the Foundation may not be shared, unless expressly requested by the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors. This includes, but is not limited to, Foundation strategy, information about trademarks, upcoming deals/sales, finances/assets, donation information, discipline or counseling information, and any other information that has not been publicly released by the Foundation. This includes any and all information related specifically to FUMC.

The list above is given as example only and does not cover the range of what the Foundation considers confidential and proprietary. If it is unclear about whether information has been released publicly or any other concerns, the Executive Director must be consulted before releasing information that could potentially harm the Foundation, or its current and potential business interests, employees, partners, or donors.

The Foundation's logo may only be used on social platforms if in accordance to the current Style & Branding Guide.

Quotes, photography, posts or other work from others may be shared but only with proper credit given to the original person or organization. All copyright, privacy, and other laws that apply offline apply online as well. Always give proper credit to credit your sources when posting a link or information gathered from another source.

Ownership of Social Media Contacts

Any social media contacts, including "followers" or "friends," that are acquired through accounts (including, but not limited to email addresses, blogs, Facebook, or other social media networks) created on behalf of the Foundation are the property of the Foundation.

Respect and Privacy Rights

- Use common sense.
- Follow the rules of the social media sites you use.
- Speak respectfully about the Foundation and our current or former staff, Board of Directors, and other constituents.
- Write knowledgeably, accurately, and with appropriate professionalism. Despite disclaimers, your Web interaction can result in members of the public forming opinions about the Foundation and its employees, partners and interests.
- Refrain from publishing anything that could reflect negatively on the Foundation's reputation or otherwise embarrass the Foundation, including posts about drug or alcohol abuse, profanity, off-color or sexual humor, and other inappropriate conduct. Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not otherwise be acceptable in the Foundation's workplace. Show respect for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

- Honor the privacy rights of our current staff, Board of Directors, and partners by seeking their permission before writing about or displaying internal Foundation information that could be considered a breach of their privacy and confidentiality.
- Ensure that your social networking conduct is consistent with the all other Foundation policies.
- Respect the law, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use.

Media / Public Relations Inquires

Media inquiries for information about the Foundation and its current and potential projects, employees, partners, clients, and competitors should be referred to the Executive Director. This does not specifically include your opinions, writing, and interviews on topics aside from the Foundation and our current and potential projects, employees, partners, or donors.

Social Media Guidelines for the Church Accounts

The following are tips and guidelines for posting on social media accounts belonging to the Foundation. If you have permission, please follow these guidelines when posting from Foundation accounts.

THINGS TO DO:

- Adhere to all guidelines expressed in the Foundation’s Style & Branding Guide, including voice, formatting of designs, logo usage, version of Bible scripture, etc.
- Link back to Foundation website, FUMC website, or other sites when at all possible.
- Interact with and care for the Foundation’s followers.
- Get the permission of everyone you take a photo of before posting; this can be accomplished by printing an announcement on event materials stating that photography may be used for public relations and providing contact information for persons who wish to decline.
- Glean what you can from interactions with your followers and share with other Foundation staff when necessary.

THINGS TO AVOID:

- Do not argue or debate with followers. Only engage with antagonists out of love and to clarify or correct something that is wrong. Invite them into a private conversation when at all possible.
- Consider the Internet a permanent record. Every post not only influences the reputation of the Foundation, but also FUMC and, ultimately, Jesus.
- Refrain from discussing politics in posts.
- Refrain from any and all curse words and offensive/vulgar language.
- Be careful about personal or business accounts you link to, share, or follow. A link or follow is considered a quasi-endorsement.

- Verify all the information you post is accurate before posting.
- If mentioning someone from the Foundation or FUMC, be sure of their title/status (pastor, staff, member, attender, etc.) prior to posting.
- Do not criticize or challenge someone online.
- Do not post personal addresses, phone numbers, email, etc. unless requested by the individual for appropriate purposes.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE POSTING

Before sending every post, ask yourself these questions:

- How does this support the mission of the Foundation?
- What am I trying to accomplish with this post?
- Does this post contain sensitive, confidential, or proprietary Foundation/personal information?
- Do we want this to be public record in thirty years?
- Could this post be misrepresented, taken out of context, and used to malign my character or the Foundation's reputation?
- Worst-case scenario: how could this information be used?