

<b>Policy Number: 08</b>	<b>Effective: Immediately</b>
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<b>Approved by: Board of Directors</b>	<b>Date: January 27, 2015</b>

## SOCIAL MEDIA & INTERNET USAGE POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE:

To provide Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO) staff with expectations for INTERNET USAGE and participation in social media, including IWSO-hosted social media, and non-IWSO social in which the staff member's affiliation to IWSO is known, identified or presumed.

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT:

All staff are to follow the procedures outlined in this policy when using the internet and social media, recognizing that social media is a fast moving phenomenon and it is impossible for one policy to cover all circumstances.

IWSO staff are not prevented from participating in social media, however they should be aware of those areas where conflict may arise. All the conventions that apply to other communications about or within IWSO apply to the use of social media, specifically including:

- Respecting clients, donors and one another;
- Protecting confidentiality, privacy and security and/or;
- Safeguarding and proper use of IWSO assets.

Internet usage including social media is owned and operated by IWSO. Internet usage is intended for business purposes except in pre-approved cases by the Executive Director.

Internet usage including social media is subject to monitoring by IT personnel

Non-compliance with this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

### 3. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all staff of IWSO in the use of any social media tools and internet sites.

### 4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Internet Usage and Social Media provides a number of benefits in which staff may wish to participate –from getting the word out on key IWSO issues, to collaborating on a

community program. It is a powerful way to build a community, exchange ideas, learn about things and impact the expertise of IWSO.

Emerging platforms for online collaboration are fundamentally changing the way work is done, offering new ways to engage with clients, colleagues and the world at large. Social media is a new model for interaction and can help build stronger ties with the community. It is a way to take part in global conversations related to key IWSO issues.

Social media activity can blur the boundaries between personal and professional lives. All staff should consider the potential impact of their activities on IWSO, their professional regulatory body, clients, fellow staff and the organization's reputation.

## 5. DEFINITIONS:

**Blogs:** Short for "web log", a site that allows an individual or group of individuals to share information with online audiences.

**Confidentiality:** The ethical principle or legal right that staff will not disclose any information relating to a client, unless the client gives consent permitting disclosure or there is a legal requirement to share the information (i.e. Children's Aid Society, Inquest, Professional licensing body)

**Documentation:** Recording of the information required in order to ensure quality of care, client safety and continuity of care. This information will be documented in the client record, which may be paper based or electronic. Documentation must include assessment and identification of client needs.

**Friending:** The action of requesting or adding somebody as a contact within social networking sites or social community sites.

**Identifying Information:** Refers to information that either directly or indirectly identifies an individual.

**Public Domain:** To be freely accessible, without restriction, to all who come in contact with the cited information, data etc.

**Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO):** For the purposes of this policy, includes all offices operated by IWSO or locations where IWSO clients are supported.

**Social Media Platforms:** Technology tools and online spaces for integrating and sharing user-generated content in order to engage constituencies in conversations and

allow them to participate in content and community creation. Examples are websites, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

**Social Media:** Includes but are not limited to websites, blogs, podcasts, discussion forums, on-line collaborative information and publishing systems that are accessible to internal and external audiences (Facebook, Google+ and Twitter).

**Staff:** For the purposes of this policy, includes all employees (permanent full time, part time and casual) and others such as volunteers, contractors outsourced services providers and affiliates.

**User ID:** Identifying credentials that allow a user to access a computing resource. Generally a User ID is associated with a password which makes up a user credential.

**User Credentials:** A valid User ID and password, combined within an authentication system or method that grants the user access to a system or resource.

## 6. PROCEDURE

**6.1 Privacy:** IWSO's commitment to maintaining the privacy of its clients, families, donors, staff, vendors, etc. is absolutely critical. Upon hire with IWSO, all staff are required to sign a statement of confidentiality that includes not sharing information about clients and the organization. (Privacy Policy).

**6.2 Respect:** Discriminatory comments are not permitted. Discriminatory comments are those that refer to race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental and/or access issues - or any other factors identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code. (Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Policy, Workplace Harassment)

**6.3 Caution and common sense:** Virtual discussion groups are a powerful way to connect with other people. A message sent to one person can easily be shared widely. Content should be considered carefully: if a statement could not be broadcast in a public venue then it should not be posted in a social media forum or written in an email. Whatever is published electronically is widely accessible and will be available for a long time.

**6.4 No endorsements:** Staff should not use social media for commercial advertising or solicitation. Staff should not recommend particular treatments, services or goods. IWSO-approved users of IWSO sites may use social media platforms to announce events, opportunities to donate, new programs, etc.

**6.5 Advocacy:** IWSO supports open dialogue and the open exchange of ideas. Staff who have identified themselves on-line as IWSO staff members (e.g. those who have listed their workplaces in their profile), must not publicly support (or “like” on Facebook or other sites) groups, petitions or causes that may be in conflict with IWSO’s values and policies.

**6.6 Personal Identification when using social media:**

**6.7.1** Many people use their personal blogs or social media to discuss their work and add to the “industry conversation”. This policy is not intended to restrict this, as long as confidential information is not revealed and the blogger clearly identifies that opinions expressed in the blog are those of the individual and not of IWSO. Blogs that do not identify the blogger as a staff member of IWSO, do not discuss IWSO and are purely about personal matters would fall outside this policy.

**6.7.2** Staff should use a personal email address (not [immigrantwomenservices.com](mailto:immigrantwomenservices.com) address) as their primary means of identification on personal social media accounts. Staff should not use an IWSO email address for social media notifications.

**6.7.3** If an individual using social media makes it clear in their profile that they work for IWSO, they are encouraged to include a simple and visible disclaimer advising that the views expressed are their own and that they are not speaking on behalf on the organization. In addition, the author should write in the first persons (“I”, not “we”), ensuring that it is clear that they are speaking for themselves. Sample profile: “Support worker at IWSO and my views are my own. Food and dance are my passion”.

**6.7.4** Should a staff member’s blog, posting or other online activities be in consistence with, or would negatively impact IWSO’s reputation or brand, there should not be reference to IWSO or their connection to IWSO.

**6.7.5** Should a staff member respond to, or initiate, a conversation (e.g. post or tweet) about IWSO, they must acknowledge their connection to IWSO and speak in the first person (“I”) to show their opinion is their own. For example: “As a staff member of IWSO, I personally agree with you, Tracey”.

**6.7.6** Staff members who have (or want to have) personal blog (or social media page), which indicates that they work at IWSO, will request permission from the Executive Director.

**6.7.7** If a staff member is offered payment to produce a blog (or social media page) for a third party, this could constitute a conflict of interest and must be discussed with the IWSO Executive Director.

**6.7.8** when a staff member is contacted by the media about posts on their blog that relate to IWSO they must, as with all media request, advise the Executive Director to receive approval and guidance before responding.

**6.7.9** Staff should contact the Executive Director if they have concerns regarding what is appropriate to include in their blog.

**6.8 Authenticity of content:** Blogs post and comments must be accurate and factual. Authors should be the first to respond to their mistakes. If an error is made, identify the mistake and correct it quickly. If an earlier post is modified ensure that it is clear that this has been done.

**6.9 Posting information about IWSO:**

**6.9.1** Staff will refrain from posting negative comments about the organization, its partners, vendors, suppliers or individuals that could cause reputational harm.

**6.9.2** Staff will refrain from posting derogatory comments about other staff, clients or IWSO Stakeholders.

**6.9.3** Staff are prohibited from posting any client or staff images. Communications delegate (s) may post client photos and/or stories using official IWSO media sites and platforms if the client, or Substitute Decision Maker for the client has signed a consent form and the ED approves the publication.

**6.10 “Friending clients:**

**6.10.1** Many social media vehicles enable an individual to “friend” someone into their social network. “Friending” a client is not consistent with the need to keep a personal and profession separation. Friending clients can compromise confidentiality and the privacy of both the staff member and the client, as well blurring the boundaries of a professional relationship. Staff are responsible for ensuring their interaction with clients is through IWSO official methods, for example phone or in-person, and meets the professional boundary guidelines outlined by their professional association or regulatory body.

**6.10.2** The recommended course of action is that any client requests for “friendship”, business contacts, direct or @ replies, blog responses or requests for a blog response within social media sites be ignored and addressed subsequently in-person. This is to preserve the integrity of the professional relationship and protect confidentiality.

**6.11 Official IWSO sites, blogs and accounts:** IWSO operates its own website, blog and social media accounts.

**6.11.1** Only the IWSO Communications delegate (s) is permitted to create official internet or social media sites that include IWSO as an identifier in their text or through use of the corporate logo. Sites or pages existing without prior authorization as required above will be subject to review when discovered and may be amended or removed.

**6.11.2** The communications delegate moderates the IWSO site.

**6.11.3** The Executive Director shall approve the communications delegate (s) and official spokespeople for IWSO who may comment on behalf of the organization.

**6.11.4** Content posted in IWSO sites will reflect IWSO values and opinions.

**6.11.5** For IWSO sites, an IWSO-provided email address (e.g. immigrantwomenservices.com) will be the primary means of identification.

**6.11.6** IWSO discourages anonymity in blogs, wikis or other forms of online participation that relate to IWSO, its business or issues with which the organization is engaged. IWSO believes in transparency and honesty. When posting comments on official sites of IWSO, staff will use their IWSO e-mail and will not use pseudonyms or post anonymously.

## **7. Internet Usage**

**7.1** Staff may use the IWSO website only for lawful purposes. You may not use our site:

- In any way that breaches any applicable local, national or international law or regulation.
- In any way that is unlawful or fraudulent, or has any unlawful or fraudulent purpose or effect.
- To send, knowingly receive, upload, download, use or re-use any material which does not comply with IWSO policies and data/images for which a licence has not been obtained.
- To transmit, or procure the sending of, any unsolicited or unauthorized advertising or promotional material or any other form of similar solicitation (spam).
- To knowingly transmit data, send or upload any material that contains viruses, Trojan horses, worms, time-bombs, keystroke loggers, spyware, adware or any other harmful programs or similar computer code designed to adversely affect the operation of any computer software or hardware.
- Offensive, improper or inaccurate material inadvertently posted on the website or Facebook/other social medial will be removed immediately.
- IWSO respects the privacy of users and under normal circumstances will not access user's accounts. However, IWSO reserves the right to examine the contents of user's accounts should the need arise. Such circumstances might include suspected misuse of the facilities or protection of the integrity of the system.

## 8. SECURITY

For security purposes, users may not share IWSO account or password information with anyone. Internet accounts are to be used only by the assigned user of the account for authorized purposes. Attempting to obtain another user's account password is strictly prohibited. A user must contact the IT administrator to obtain a password reset if they have reason to believe that any unauthorized person has learned their password. Users must take all necessary precautions to prevent unauthorized access to Internet services. (IT Policy)

- 8.1 All passwords should be a minimum 8 characters consisting of alpha and numeric characters.
- 8.2 Users shall change their passwords every six months.

## 9. AUTHORIZED USAGE

Authorized users of IWSO network facilities shall be issued a unique User ID. Prior to being issued a unique User ID, users shall agree in writing to upload the Social Media Guidelines appended to this policy (Appendix 2). The Social Media Guidelines may be amended from time to time as deemed appropriate by IWSO. Authorized users are solely responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their passwords and the security of their accounts. Authorized users are solely responsible for all actions, including electronic messaging, taken while the User ID is in use.

- 9.1 Any attempt to violate the provisions of this policy, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt, will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may range from reprimand to loss of account privileges and termination of employees.
- 9.2 Violation of Computer and Internet use could result in a criminal offence. Such violations could include:
  - Unauthorized use of a computer (Criminal Code, section 342.1);
  - Mischief (Criminal Code, section 430. (1.1));
  - Corrupting Morals (Criminal Code, section 163);
  - Making, distributing, selling, or possession of Child Pornography (Criminal Code, Section 163.1).

## 10. RELATED PRACTICES AND/OR LEGISLATIONS:

*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, as amended ("FIPPA").*

<http://www.search.e-laws.gov.on.ca/en/isysquery/b31ffc15-1f72-48ac-9bdd-18691315d5c7/1/doc/?search=browseStatutes&context=#hit1>

*Human Rights Code*

<http://www.search.e-laws.gov.on.ca/en/isysquery/532fe0da-7e4a-4bba-a45a-933cf5b4e0d4/6/frame/?search=browseSource&context=>

*Criminal Code of Canada. (R.S., 1985, c. C-46).*

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/C-46/>

## 11. REFERENCES:

Royal Ottawa Health Care Group, *Use of Social Media by ROHCG Staff*, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), *Use of Social Media by Staff & Physicians* Ottawa, Canada

Ethical Framework for the Use of Social Media by Mental Health Professionals, Online Therapy Institute,

<http://www.onlinetherapyinstitute.com/ethical-framework-for-the-use-of-social-media-by-mental-health-professionals/>

Kaiser Permanente *Social Media Policy*,

[http://xnet.kp.org/newscenter/media/downloads/socialmediapolicy\\_091609.pdf](http://xnet.kp.org/newscenter/media/downloads/socialmediapolicy_091609.pdf) IWK

Health Centre *Social Media Guidelines – Work-related Use*, Halifax, Canada

*Spring Technology in Practice* The Standard, (2009).

*Social Network Use: A Test of Self-Regulation*, Janet Anderson & Puckrin, Karen - Journal of Nursing Regulation Vol.2, Issue 1, April 2011

*Using Social Or Professional Networking Sites Can Breach Confidentiality*: June 2010 [https://www.cmpa-acpm.ca/cmpapd04/docs/resource\\_files/perspective/2010/02/pdf/com\\_p1002\\_7-e.pdf](https://www.cmpa-acpm.ca/cmpapd04/docs/resource_files/perspective/2010/02/pdf/com_p1002_7-e.pdf)

*Social Media Policy* Keeley Kolmes, Psy.D, San Francisco, USA (2010)

<http://www.drkkolmes.com/docs/socmed.pdf>

## 12. APPENDICES:

Privacy Policy

Social Media Guidelines

IT Policy

Anti-Racism/anti-Oppression Policy

Workplace Harassment Policy