

Social Networking Communications

Social Networking/Communications

Policy # 3021

Policy

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Inova, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow employees or otherwise adversely affects employees, patients, visitors, suppliers and people who work on behalf of Inova or Inova's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Purpose

At Inova, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family friends, and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, Inova has established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all Inova employees.

Guidelines

Carefully read these guidelines, the Code of Conduct (consult Human Resources for a copy of the booklet), Anti-Harassment/Anti-Sexual Harassment, Policy #2005 and Workplace Violence, Policy #3060, and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Be Respectful

Always be fair and courteous to fellow employees, patients, visitors, suppliers or people who work on behalf of Inova. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing the Problem Solving Procedure, Policy #3028 than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage employees, patients, visitors, suppliers or others working on behalf of Inova, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of age, sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, genetic information, national origin, physical or mental disability/handicap, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, veteran status, sexual orientation, citizen status or any other status protected by law.

Be Honest and Accurate

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about Inova or Inova's employees, patients, visitors, suppliers or others working on behalf of Inova.

Postings

Post only appropriate and respectful content.

- Maintain the confidentiality of Inova's trade secrets and private or confidential information. Trade secrets may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, know-how and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communication.
- Respect patient privacy laws. It is illegal to disclose protected health information. Do not post any private or confidential information related to Inova's patients. Such online conduct may violate the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as the spokesperson for Inova. If Inova is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee and make it clear that your views do not represent those of Inova, Inova employees, patients, visitors, suppliers, or others working on behalf of Inova. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with Inova, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of Inova. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Inova."

Using Social Media at Work

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment we provide, unless it is work-related and authorized by your manager or consistent with Inova's Electronic Communication System Usage, Policy #3075. Do not use Inova email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Retaliation is Prohibited

Inova prohibits taking negative action against an employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Media Contacts

Employees should not speak to the media on Inova's behalf without contacting the Director, Digital Marketing & Communications. All media inquiries should be directed and handled through that department.