

Sample Cell Phone/Social Media Policy

Use of PERSONAL CELLULAR PHONES/ SMART PHONES

While at work employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones/smart phones as is expected for the use any land phones or computers belonging to the Practice. Personal activities during the work hours, regardless of the communication device used can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others.

Cell phones/Smart Phones are not to be carried on the job without out specific permission from the Office Manager.

Employees will inform their supervisor of the need to carry a cell phone/smart phone, who in turn will set up a meeting with the Office Manager to discuss with the employee a need to have a cell phone/ smart phone on the job. Specific permission for use will be granted/denied on a case-by-case basis.

Smartphones, employee-owned or not, should only be used for work-related purposes while on company time or while using company time and resources such as WIFI.

If an employee would not use his smartphone in that manner with a supervisor standing behind him, then it is not work-related and probably not permissible.

Prohibited activities include:

- Checking personal Facebook or Twitter profiles;**
- Sending personal emails, phone calls, text messages, and instant messages;**
- Any non-work-related Internet activity; and**
- Using Netflix, Hulu, or YouTube.**

Employees are asked to complete personal activities during breaks and lunch period and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the Practice's policy. The Practice will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace.

POLICY SPECIFIC TO TEXTING

While texting is an accepted and commonly utilized form of communication in today's society, practice related matters should not be texted (between staff/staff, staff/doctor or doctor/staff).

If a sensitive subject needs to be discussed it should communicated via email (as long as no patient information is included – unless sent through a secure email address/server (ex. staff@podiatrypractice.com to doctor@podiatrypractice.com) or discussed in person with doctor/manager/staff member (individuals involved).

Matters such as an employee communicating the need to arrive late to work or take a sick day should be handled via phone call (chain of command phone numbers shall be provided for all employees at the time of hire). Employees who utilize texting as a source of communicating this type of information shall be subject to written warning (with very few exceptions).

With the hopes of maintaining positive communication practices, we wish employees and doctors to abstain for utilizing texting when at all possible.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Although the Practice respects the privacy and personal time of its employees, the Practice's legal obligations require it to adopt certain guidelines for its employees' activities both in and outside of the workplace that could potentially affect their job performance, the performance of others, or the Practice's work environment and interests.

Online social media enables individuals to share their insights, express their opinions, and share information all over the world. Unfortunately, every online social tool and medium has both proper and improper uses, each of which has a potential impact on the Practice and its work environment, regardless of whether these communications occur at work or on the employees' own time.

In short, employees must understand that the same principles and guidelines that apply to their activities in general also apply to their online activities. This includes all forms of social media, including, but not limited to, online publishing and discussion, such as blogs, wikis, file-sharing, user-generated video and audio, and social networks, such as MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr, to mention a few.

Therefore, in order to honor its legal obligations, the following is the Practice's social media and networking policy. If this policy fails to address a certain situation, employees need to consult with their manager, supervisor, or Human Resources Department if they are uncertain how to proceed.

1) Only Practice employees authorized by their supervisor or manager may use social networking websites during working hours or on Practice equipment, even if it is to conduct Practice business.

Many social networking sites collect profile information for advertising (SPAM) targeted at individuals with particular affiliations and interests. Use of the sites may increase SPAM to your e-mail account.

In addition, from the social networking sites or links on these sites, your equipment or network may be exposed to spyware and viruses that may damage your operating system, capture data, or otherwise compromise your privacy, your computer, and the campus network, as well as affect others with whom you communicate.

Employees should therefore not post or blog during business hours or on Practice equipment unless specifically authorized to do so for business purposes.

2) Regardless of whether employees are on their own time or not, only authorized employees may post on a social network profile a Practice e-mail address or Practice telephone numbers for contact purposes, or post any official Practice information, resources, calendars, or events.

3) Employees should never disclose any proprietary, trade secret, or confidential information relating to the Practice, its customers, its vendors, or its employees. Such information would typically include Practice trade secrets, customer identities, and information, Practice financial details and business performance, planned acquisitions, future product launches, etc.

4) Employees should ask permission to publish or report on conversations that are meant to be private or internal to the Practice.

5) Employees are to keep Practice logos or trademarks off their blogs and profiles and not mention the Practice in any commentary, unless authorized to do so for business purposes in accordance with this policy.

6) Social media should also not be used for internal communications among fellow employees, vendors, or competitors. Honest, respectful communication and disagreement can create a positive environment for change, but airing internal differences using the social media is inappropriate. Instead, employees should bring work-related complaints to their supervisor, manager, or Human Resources Department rather than blogging or posting such complaints online.

7) Supervisors and managers are not permitted to make recommendations of employees or former employees without the written permission of the Human Resources Department.

8) Employees' social media activities should not interfere with their work commitments.

9) Employees must also use a disclaimer whenever they are expressing their views through social media that might in any way be viewed as relating to the Practice, its employees, its vendors, or its competitors. Employees must also appropriately identify themselves as an employee of the Practice in such situations. A typical disclaimer might read as follows:

“The views expressed herein are mine, _____ (Employee’s name) alone and do not necessarily reflect the positions, strategies or opinions of _____ (Practice name), its employees or its vendors in any way.”

10) Employees must at all times be respectful to the Practice, other employees, customers, partners, and competitors. Employees should never use any form of social media in a way that is disrespectful, inflammatory, offensive, dishonest, or damaging to the Practice's business interests, which includes having any content that contains protected class slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or anything likely to tarnish the image of the Practice, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the Practice's workplace.

Also, if employees ever speak about a competitor of the Practice, they must make sure what they say is factual and does not disparage the competitor. Employees should avoid unnecessary or unproductive arguments. Online "brawls" may increase traffic on your blog, but they will also show a great lack of respect in the end. Employees should not try to "settle scores" or "get even." Such tactics only ends in inflammatory debates that reflect poorly on the Practice. Whenever using social media, stick to the facts.

Clearly, employees should never publish false information about the Practice or its employees, customers, affiliates, vendors, or competitors.

11) Even when acting with the authorization of the Practice to use social media for business purposes, employees must identify themselves by name and, when relevant, by their role at the Practice whenever they discuss the Practice or any Practice-related matters, including the discussion of competitors. Employees must also write in the first person in order to further reinforce that the opinions they are expressing are their own. Employees must therefore make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the Practice. Employees must be honest regarding their identity when using social media and refrain from the use of aliases and pseudonyms whenever any

comments are made relating to the Practice or any of its employees, customers, vendors, or competitors.

12) When acting with the Practice's authorization, employees are still to never violate any applicable copyright or fair use laws while using social media without the written approval of the owner.

13) Employees should only use a Practice e-mail address to register for social media sites when they are expressly authorized to do so for business purposes by a supervisor or manager.

In summary, employees are expected to use good judgment and take personal and professional responsibility whenever they publish anything online when they are representing the Practice, which occurs every time they mention the Practice, any of its employees, vendors, or competitors.

The Practice does not routinely monitor social networking sites. However, as with other electronic resources, the Practice's systems' administrators may perform activities necessary to ensure the integrity, functionality, and security of the Practice's electronic resources.

Again, if you have any confusion about whether to publish something online, please check with your supervisor and then the Human Resources Department.

Violations of this policy may subject employees to discipline under the Practice's "Rules and Guidelines" policy, as determined by management.