



## SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

Social networking encompasses a broad sweep of online activity, all of which can be tracked or traced. As a system, we believe that social networking can drive business and support professional development efforts. This social networking policy will serve to provide guidelines for the use of social networking in the workplace. Attached to this policy are procedures to be followed when utilizing social networking.

### **2.0 REQUIREMENTS**

Staff is personally responsible for their online activity conducted via a network email address, which can be traced back to the organization's domain, and/or which uses organizational assets. The network address attached to your name implies that you are acting on the system's behalf. When using the system's email address or organizational assets to engage in any social networking or professional social networking activity (for example LinkedIn), all actions are public, and staff will be held fully responsible for any and all such activities.

Outside the workplace, your rights to privacy and free speech protect online activity conducted on your personal social networks with your personal email address. However, what you publish on such personal online sites should never be attributed to the system and should not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the system. If you choose to list your work affiliation on a social network, then you should regard all communication on that network as you would in a professional network.

Do not post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate applicable local, state or federal laws or regulations and never disclose proprietary or confidential information. Sharing this type of information, even unintentionally, can result in legal action against you, the system, and/or the client.

### **3.0 SCOPE.**

This policy applies to all staff at RCWE as well as contractors, grantees, sub-grantees,



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and any other authorized user of the system network.

## **4.0 RESPONSIBILITY.**

The responsibility for implementation and oversight of this policy shall reside with the RCWE CEO and the IT staff.

## **5.0 HISTORY.**

Name	Date	Rev. Level	Description of Change	Effective Date
Deb O'Neil	9/16/2011	A	New Policy	11/4/2011



## **SOCIAL NETWORKING PROCEDURES**

Effective Date: November 4, 2011

As a system, we believe that social networking can drive business and support professional development efforts. We are also aware that social networking use will not be used exclusively for business. With that in mind, we provide the following guidelines for online behavior:

### **Your Identity Online**

- You are responsible for what you post
- Be transparent. When participating in any social networking affiliated with the system or RCWE, disclose your identity and affiliation with the organization, your clients, and your professional and/or personal interest. When posting to a blog, always use your name. Never create an alias and never be anonymous.
- Follow the terms and conditions of use that have been established by each venue used for your social networking activities
- Obey the law. Don't post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate applicable local, state or federal laws or regulations.

### **Creating and Managing Content**

- Be direct, informative and brief. Follow the social networking procedures that are set forth herein
- Never use a client's name in a blog posting, unless you have written permission and good reason to do so
- Fact-check your posts. Always evaluate your contributions accuracy and truthfulness. Before posting any online material, ensure that the material is accurate, truthful and without factual error
- Spell and grammar check everything. Content never disappears entirely once it has been posted
- Correct errors promptly. If you find that your blog entry contains an error or mistake, correct it. Since transparency is key, admit your mistake, apologize if necessary, correct it and move on



## **Leaving Comments**

- When posting to a blog, refrain from posting about controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects, including politics, sex, religion or any other non-business related subjects. Keep the tone of your comments respectful and informative, never condescending or “loud”. Use sentence case format, not capital letters. Stick to this maxim whenever you are contributing to any blogs or social and professional networks.
- Avoid personal attacks, online fights, and hostile communications. If a blogger or any other online influencer posts a statement with which you disagree, voice your opinion, but do not escalate the conversation to a heated argument. Write reasonably, factually, and with good humor. Understand and credit the other person’s point of view and avoid any communications that could result in personal, professional, or credibility attacks.
- Never disclose proprietary or confidential information
- When appropriate and possible, provide a link to your LinkedIn or other appropriate profile, or to supporting documents
- If in doubt, don’t!

## **Confidentiality and Privacy**

- Don’t disclose confidential information. Do not disclose or use confidential or proprietary information of the RCWE or the system or any client in any form of online media. Sharing this type of information, even unintentionally, can result in legal action against you, your organization, the system, and/or the client
- Avoid forums where there is little control over what you know to be confidential information. Often sensitive things are being discussed in the social network circles—so be very selective and thoughtful about where you post and how your reply (or not)
- Respect the privacy of your fellow coworkers, clients and of the opinions of others. Before sharing a comment, post, picture, or video about a client or coworker through any type of social networking or network, his/her consent is not only a courtesy, it is a requirement.

## **Potential Conflicts and Red Flags**

Be sure to get approval for a post when:



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- Responding to a negative post. If a blogger or any other online participant posts an inaccurate, accusatory or negative comment about the organization or any of the organization's clients, do not engage in the conversation without prior approval
- Posting recommendations for colleagues. Posting recommendations of colleagues is a tool of professional social networking sites. The recommendations and comments you post about other current and former employees can have consequences, even if you are making the recommendations personally and not on behalf of the organization. Therefore, we ask that you clear all potential recommendations and comments through the RCWE CEO for anyone who is or ever was associated with the organization

## **Other Potential Red Flag Situations**

- Check the state's particular prohibitions against and/or limitations on testimonials before posting them online
- Use a disclaimer if you communicate electronically about fees, awards, recent projects or outcomes. Such communications must be approved by the RCWE CEO
- Be aware that staff-client relationships may be created online—this often occurs in social networking whether you want it to or not. Use of a firm approved disclaimer may be appropriate

## **Building Your Virtual Footprint and Your Network**

- Build a reputation of trust among your clients, media and the public. When you are reaching out to journalists, bloggers, clients or colleagues through social networking, take every opportunity to build a reputation of trust and establish yourself as a credible and transparent workforce development professional
- When using social networks with your network e-mail and professional identification, do not "friend" anyone whom you either do not actually know and/or with whom you have not previously corresponded