

## ***E-communications Policy***

### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to:

Explain what constitutes appropriate use of our electronic communication systems. It relates to the use of tools such as email, the internet and telephones that are provided for business purposes. It applies to all employees, volunteers, participants and any other person who is using/accessing our IT systems. While we recognise that there are occasions when it is necessary to make or receive calls, send or receive personal emails or access the internet for private use, this procedure encourages the proper use of the communication systems whilst respecting the law and the need to provide a safe working environment for everybody.

### **2. Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Centre's Board to ensure that this policy is implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Centre's Community Development Officer to ensure that the procedures are implemented.

We require all staff who use social media, whether in a professional capacity or a personal capacity, to demonstrate standards of conduct and behaviour that are consistent with the following documents

- Social media framework (procedure and guidelines)
- Employee Code of Conduct

### **3. Principles**

The use of email and the internet to communicate has become just as common as using a telephone. While they provide many benefits, such as the ability to reach many people simultaneously and accessing information instantly, care is required in their use in the workplace. This procedure provides clear guidance about what is and is not appropriate usage at the Aberfoyle Community Centre.

This procedure supports the Code of Conduct Policy and relates to all equipment and facilities owned or operated by the organisation wherever they are located.

The procedure applies to the following users:

- employees
- volunteers
- participants/students
- work experience students
- vocational workers
- contractors
- consultants

## 4. Definitions

### **Electronic communication**

This includes but is not limited to:

### **Social media**

This is a broad term that encompasses a wide range of web-based and mobile technologies which enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. In other words, social media enables interactivity rather than a one-way delivery of static content.

Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts and other multimedia communications.

Current examples of social media sites are

- Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Yammer and YouTube.
- email
- telephone (mobiles and landlines)
- internet pages
- library catalogues
- blogs (a web site maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material)
- chat lines (eg ICQ, MSN Messenger)
- electronic journals and texts
- on-line discussion forums (where ideas are discussed and users can communicate or leave messages for other users)

### **Email**

A service that enables people to exchange documents or messages in an electronic format

### **Internet**

A global research, information and communication network

### **Material**

Includes data, information, text, graphics, animation, speech, videos and music or other sounds which are accessible electronically

### **Mobile radio**

Includes portable hand held radios, vehicle mounted radios and base stations

### **Private use**

This means use that is not job-related

### **Wiki**

This is a page or collection of web pages designed to enable all visitors to contribute or modify content (eg Wikipedia)

### **Facebook**

### **LinkedIn**

**Twitter**

**Yammer**

**YouTube**

## **5. Policy**

To remain competitive, better serve our customers and provide our employees with the best tools to do their jobs, Aberfoyle Community Centre makes available to users access to one or more forms of electronic communication system.

The Aberfoyle Community Centre encourages the use of these systems because they can make communication more efficient and effective and because they are valuable sources of information about vendors, customers, technology, and new products and services. However, all users and everyone connected with the organisation should remember that electronic communication services are provided by the Centre are Centre property and their purpose is to facilitate and support centre activities. All computer users have the responsibility to use these resources in a professional, ethical, and lawful manner.

These guidelines are designed to assist all staff who participate in social media, recognising the many different degrees of interaction and usage that exist and are required. They outline what is considered to be acceptable use of social media by staff and volunteers of the Aberfoyle Community Centre Inc.

## **6. Procedures**

### **Private use of email, the internet, telephones and mobile radios**

We recognise that on occasions it may be necessary for people to use the organisation's electronic communication systems for private use. This is acceptable if it:

- does not interfere with customer service, productivity or work performance
- does not have a negative impact on customers, colleagues or the environment
- does not violate any provisions of this procedure or Australian law
- takes place during scheduled breaks (where possible).

### **Participation**

Participation in social media can be an avenue for self-expression. We recognise that our employees write and contribute to personal social media in their own time using their own resources.

If you are commenting as a private citizen, make sure your posts cannot be interpreted as an official statement on behalf of the Centre. Also make sure that your posting does not compromise the perception that you can do your job in an unbiased or professional manner. Remember that every time you contribute online in a personal or a professional capacity, you are building your online reputation—something that could be inextricably linked to your identity for many years.

## **Inappropriate use**

Please check with your manager about the levels of tolerance of personal use of social media during working hours. In general, the personal use of social media during work time is treated in the same way as the personal use of phones and emails—it should not be excessive or interfere with your work.

Certain activities are inappropriate when using our electronic communication systems; they may also be illegal. Inappropriate use can affect the efficiency of our systems, damage our corporate and business image and sometimes result in legal proceedings being brought against this organisation and the user. The term inappropriate use includes:

- accessing, downloading, printing or storing pornography
- accessing, downloading, printing or storing information related to terrorism activities
- downloading or transmitting (internally or externally) fraudulent, threatening, offensive, intimidating, defamatory, harassing, discriminatory or otherwise unlawful messages or images
- accessing, communicating by and uploading non-work related information and images to external social networking sites, wikis, blogs, discussion forums and video sharing networks
- transmitting or using material which infringes copyright held by another person
- violating software licensing agreements
- transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material
- impersonating another individual
- disclosing confidential information without authorisation
- downloading software and games onto centre-owned laptops and PCs without the prior approval of the Board of Management.
- having internet sites open but minimised all day - only use when needed
- use of peer to peer networking (P2P) services to upload or download material
- other usage deemed inappropriate by the Board of Management.

## **Standards for use**

### **Email**

- Email is an essential work communication tool for many of our users.
- All work-related emails are business records and are regarded as corporate documents. As such they are 'discoverable' and subject to various legislative requirements, including the Freedom of Information Act 1991 (FOI). It is important to use appropriate and professional business language as emails can be used as evidence in a court of law.
- The centre prefers a plain English approach to all written communication, including emails. They need to be written with care using everyday English, simple sentences and direct speech as well as a polite and professional tone. This may assist if they are the subject of an FOI request in the future.
- When sending external emails you need to identify yourself with an electronic signature that contains your name, title and telephone number and brand information
- You need to be aware that the intended recipient of an email may not be the only person who will read it. Emails can very easily be forwarded, and sometimes inadvertently, to receivers without the permission or knowledge of the original sender.

- When opening emails or attachments, please take care to ensure that its contents are not obscene or defamatory. These kinds of emails should not be intentionally forwarded to anyone else.
- Generation or sending of junk mail or spam internally or externally is prohibited.
- Downloading of files should be limited to those needed for business purposes. This is due to the available bandwidth and the size of most downloadable files.
- There is a size restriction on files which can be attached to external emails

### **Internet**

- Access to the internet is provided as part of the network login set up and an introduction is included as part of the orientation process.
- Please be aware that not all information on the internet is freely available for use without permission from the copyright owner. Intellectual property rights apply to most material on the internet, including text, graphics and sound.
- 'Use' includes downloading, reproducing, transmitting or duplicating all or part of any information which is not in the public domain.
- Any misuse of information may result in legal action against individual employees as well as the organisation.
- Anyone found in breach of intellectual property laws will need to use their own resources if legal action is taken against them.

### **Security and privacy**

- Users are responsible for the security of their computer and should log off or lock their screen when away from their desk. Employees/volunteers are also responsible for the security of mobile telephones and mobile radios.
- All incoming emails and attachments undergo scanning for viruses.
- Email addresses, transmission times and sites visited on the internet are logged as part of our routine network maintenance and management.
- The systems administration will provide copies of email content (including deleted ones) and other electronic traffic information to the Chairperson or any legal authorities as requested. The content of emails and records of email and internet use will only be accessed to investigate inappropriate use.
- Use a strong password (ie a sentence or a combination of numbers and letters) and make sure you keep it private and change it regularly.
- Personal passwords do not prohibit the network administrator from accessing information on individual PCs.

### **Social networking**

#### **Private**

Use of social networking communication sites such as blogs, chat lines, on-line discussion forums and social networking sites (as defined) for non-work related matters during work is not permitted. While some access may occur during breaks (lunch etc) the site is to be closed when work recommences.

## **Business related social media**

There is potential for the use of web and social networking sites to provide increased opportunities to engage and interact with our communities, but there are a number of areas including possible risks and resourcing implications that need to be considered.

### **Breaches of this procedure**

All users of the organisation's electronic communications systems are required to acknowledge understanding and acceptance of the conditions in this procedure.

Inappropriate use of the electronic communication systems will be dealt with in accordance with:

- the Performance Review, performance improvement procedure, Managing poor performance of volunteers procedure
- the Termination of Employment Dismissal Procedure
- the Code of Conduct
- contractual agreements (ie contractors and work experience students).
- Serious, wilful or neglectful misuse may attract warnings or disciplinary proceedings and may result in dismissal or refusal of access to the electronic communications system.

### **Correcting Incorrect Or Inaccurate Information**

When you are online in a personal capacity and read something about the Council or the organisation that concerns you, please advise the CDO who will determine whether the misinformation should be corrected and the appropriate person or channel to do so.

### **Managing Your Personal Online Presence**

In using social media tools for personal use, keep in mind that:

- by being honest and transparent and respecting others, you will avoid conflicts with your personal and professional online activities
- anything you say online will be available for a very long time
- EXAMPLE Potential employers are increasingly running online searches as part of their routine selection process. Financial institutions are also including such searches in their credit checking process. Already some people are finding it essential to change their name to get a job. In future years, facial recognition technology will enable searches for photos as well as names. Would you be happy to share your late night party snaps with a future employer?
- think carefully about how you present yourself online because the line between private and professional is often blurred in this environment
- you need to be careful about divulging information about the Council, the organisation, the people you work with or your workplace. It is easy to unthinkingly divulge private or confidential information about others or your work
- EXAMPLE There could be many reasons why some people in your workplace prefer to keep personal information private. You might be unaware of this and casually mention their name that you work with them, where they live or places they visit in an online exchange on Facebook. This might have unintended consequences for that person or for you.

- EXAMPLE You had a difficult interaction with a resident at work. A general comment online about a 'hard day' is fine but sharing details of the interaction is not appropriate and could cause unintended consequences.
- never assume that you are anonymous online. For example, a personal opinion you express on Facebook can be linked to your profile. On your profile you may have listed where you work. Or your email or IP address may be traceable to your place of work. Or your name and place of work may be easy to find through a simple web search. Information can be linked from many different areas of the web.

### **Your Online Behaviour**

What you do or say in an online environment is subject to the same standards, procedures and conditions of employment as at any other time. Of particular relevance is the Equal Opportunity Policy which states that our employees have:

- the right to complain without being victimised
- the responsibility not to discriminate against, sexually harass or victimise other employees or customers.

You must be careful to ensure that you do not use social media to participate in behaviour which could be perceived as cyberbullying. Examples of cyberbullying are communications that aim to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down or humiliate the recipient. Activities can include flaming (repeated negative messages), sexual and racist harassment, denigration, impersonation, trickery, exclusion and cyberstalking.

### **Social Media For Business Purposes**

The Chairperson of the Board of Management is authorised to speak publicly or to the media regarding the Centre.

While it is recognised that employees and volunteers as members and/or residents of the community have the right to make public comments and enter into public debate on political and social issues, care must be taken not to convey the impression that such comment is an official comment made in their capacity as an employee. No employee or volunteer may provide confidential information to the media.

- Centre staff, and volunteers should not make comment to the media relating to any matter, on behalf of the Centre
- Respect Privacy
- Do not post any information that would violate the privacy of others, including details of private conversations (unless you have gained permission).
- Protect Yourself Online
- Remember to protect your own privacy and use common sense: what you publish will be public for a long time.
- Correct Mistakes
- If you make an error, be upfront and correct it quickly.
- Use your best judgement—you are responsible for what you write
- Make sure you understand the user guidelines, etiquette and culture of the tool you are using.

- Stay within your expertise
- Only post on topics in which you have expertise or direct personal experience.
- Replace error with fact, not argument
- If you see wrong information about, or misrepresentation of, the Centre or the City of Onkaparinga, do not attempt to correct it yourself  
Please advise the CDO who will contact the appropriate person to report issue.
- Be very careful not to use, or to be perceived to use, the Centres name to endorse products, opinions or causes.
- Always clearly identify yourself
- Say who you are, using your real name, and that you are officially representing the Centre

## 7. References

- Code of Conduct
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Employee Management Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- **Legislation**
- Broadcasting Services Amendment (Online Services) Act 1999
  - Electronic Transactions Act 2000
  - Equal Opportunity Act 1984
  - Freedom of Information Act 1991
  - Copyright Act 1968

## 8. Forms or Attachments

- Electronic-communication User agreement

## 9. Approvals

	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
Approving Authority	Board of Management	
Approval Date		
Next Review Due		



## **Electronic Communication System User Agreement**

I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the electronic communication policies and procedures governing the use of the Centres e-communications system

I understand that I have no expectation of privacy when I use any of the systems.

I am aware that violations of these procedures on appropriate use may subject me to disciplinary action, including termination from employment/volunteering/access to centre, legal action and criminal liability.

I further understand that my use of the e-mail and Internet may reflect on the image Aberfoyle Community Centre to our customers, partners and community and that I have responsibility to maintain a positive representation of the Centre.

Furthermore, I understand that this policy can be amended at any time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_