



**Torquay  
Community  
House**

respect • equality • inclusion

## Social Media Policy

Approved/effective date	190820
Due for review	190823

Torquay Community House (TCH) recognises that social media is a powerful community development and engagement tool. It is about conversations with your communities, members and the sector as well as sharing content. Staff, volunteers and the Board of Management are encouraged to use social media to connect, collaborate, promote and exchange information in line with our vision and strategic plan.

The intention of this policy is to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in activities around the Web.

Comments made via social media platforms are as public as if they were making the same comments to the media or at a public forum. As such, publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that employees, volunteers and committees of governance must otherwise follow.

### Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and Board members of the Torquay Community House.

Employees, volunteers and Board members are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as affiliated with Torquay Community House other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to TCH).

## Definitions Social Media

Content created by people using highly accessible and scalable publishing technologies. Social media is distinct from industrial media, such as newspapers, television, and film. Social media comprises relatively inexpensive and accessible tools that enable anyone (even private individuals) to publish or access information – industrial media generally require significant resources to publish information. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_media](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media))

Social Media may include (although is not limited to):

- social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Bebo, Yammer)
- video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube)
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs
- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au)
- micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter)
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
  - vod and podcasting
  - online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life)
  - instant messaging (including SMS)
  - geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare)

## Statement of Policy - Professional use of social media

Authorisation to comment:

- Before engaging in social media as a representative of TCH you must become authorised to comment by the Centre Coordinator.
- You may not comment as a representative of TCH unless you are authorised to do so. Staff will use a work profile when acting in an official capacity on any of TCH's social media Tools.
- Social media identities, logon ID's and usernames may not use Torquay Community Centre's name without prior approval from the Centre Coordinator. Profile photographs must be approved by the Centre Coordinator.

## Rules of engagement

Whether using Social Media professionally or personally, it must be ensured that Torquay Community House's reputation and privacy is protected.

When using Social Media, you must:

- only disclose and discuss publicly available information
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant policies
- be polite and respectful to all people
- adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws and policies.
- disclose you are an employee, volunteer or Board member of Torquay Community Centre, and use only your own identity, or an approved official account or avatar
- comment only on your area of expertise and authority

When using Social Media, you must not:

- post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful
- use or disclose any confidential or secure information
- make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to Torquay Community House or bring it into disrepute.

In addition, when using your personal Social Media, you must not:

- imply that you are authorised to speak as a representative of Torquay Community House, nor give the impression that the views you express are those of Torquay Community House
- use your work email address or any organisational logos
- use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor or other member of Torquay Community House
- use or disclose any confidential information obtained in your capacity as an employee, volunteer or committee member of Torquay Community House

## Reasonable/unreasonable personal use

When accessing social media via the Torquay Community House Internet, intranet and extranet systems, these resources are required to be used 'reasonably', in a

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manner that does not interfere with your work and is not inappropriate or excessively accessed.

### **Guidance for navigating social media**

The following is offered as general guidance to assist in complying with the obligations set out in this policy. When in doubt, seek further guidance from the Centre Coordinator.

#### **Quality**

Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you are not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog looks decent, and take their advice on how to improve it.

The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it or ask someone else to look at it first.

#### **Privacy, confidentiality and information security**

It is completely unacceptable to publish information that is confidential, classified or deals with matters that are internal in nature.

#### **Protect the privacy of others**

Participants and volunteers should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify participants and volunteers without permission and never discuss confidential information relating to them.

#### **Be Honest**

Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading, always disclose any vested interests you may have in the discussion. Consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

#### **Copyright**

Copyright laws must be respected, attribute work to the original author/source wherever possible. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

## **Harassment and bullying**

- Bullying and harassment policy applies online and in the physical workplace.
- Workplace bullying and harassment includes any bullying or harassing comments employees, volunteers and committee members make online, even on their own private social networks or out of office hours.
- Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings are in breach of the Bullying policy, and may result in disciplinary action being taken.
- All employees, volunteers and committee members are expected to treat their colleagues with respect and dignity and must ensure their behaviour does not constitute bullying and/or harassment.
- Materials must not be published that may cause injury to another person, organisation, association or organisation/company's reputation, seek further guidance from the Co ordinator if you think publishing such material is necessary.
- If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to Torquay Community House, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should immediately report the circumstances to the Centre Coordinator.
- If speaking about others, ensure what is said is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments and inflammatory debates, ensure what is said is factually correct.

## **Offensive or obscene material**

Do not post any material that may be offensive or obscene and may infringe relevant online classification laws if it is pornographic, sexually suggestive, harassing, hateful, racist, sexist, abusive or discriminatory.

## **Mistakes or errors**

If an error is made be transparent about your mistake and correct it quickly. If unsure refer to the Coordinator as soon as possible for advice. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

## **References:**

1. Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
2. Information Privacy Act 2000
3. Equal Opportunity Act

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4. Department of Justice Social Media Policy  
Policy tool for Social Media (<http://socialmedia.policytool.net/>)