*NOTE:* *This policy is not mandated by New York City/State or Federal law, and reflects the operational preferences of the author only.*

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The use of social media presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. [Organization Name] has established the following guidelines for the responsible use of social media, and to minimize the legal risks associated with such use, avoid loss of productivity, and ensure that [Organization Name] electronic communications systems are used appropriately and in accordance with applicable law and [Organization Name] policies.

For purposes of this policy, social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including, but not limited to, via the employee’s or someone else’s web log or blog, personal website, message board, chat room, electronic newsletter, online forum, wiki, social networking site, or other site or service that permit users to share information with others.

[Organization Name] owns all social media accounts used on behalf of [Organization Name] for business purposes, regardless of the employee who opens or uses such account, including any and all login information, passwords, content, posts, followers and contacts.

When using social media on behalf of [Organization Name] for business purposes (or if referencing [Organization Name] during other uses) all [Organization Name] policies, including but not limited to the Foundation’s Electronic Communications Systems Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Policy Against Harassment, all policies on ethics and standards of conduct, and all policies prohibiting unlawful discrimination against employees or applicants for employment, must be adhered to. Media or legal inquiries should be referred to the proper person within [Organization Name], and employees may not speak to the media on [Organization Name] behalf without specific and/or prior authorization.

Responsible Use of Social Media:

* **Exercise sound judgment and common sense –** Postings and communications made via social media are available to be read by the masses (including [Organization Name] itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time and may affect your or [Organization Name] image.
* **Respect others –** Do not post anything that could be construed as harmful or offensive, including ethnic slurs, personal insults, sexist or discriminatory comments, obscene material, threatening or intimidating content or content that might constitute harassment or create a hostile work environment. You are legally responsible for your postings and you may be subject to liability, or subject [Organization Name] to liability, if your posts are found defamatory, harassing or in violation of any applicable law. Remember, anything that would be impermissible in the workplace is not permissible between co-workers online.
* **Respect intellectual property and other laws –** You should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property rights of other companies and individuals and obtain appropriate permission before using a third party’s copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks or other intellectual property. **S**ocial media postings must respect copyright, trade secret, and other applicable laws.
* **Respect and comply with the terms of use of all sites you visit** – Do not expose yourself or [Organization Name] to legal risk by using a social media site in violation of its terms of use. Review the terms of use of all social media sites you visit and ensure your use complies with them.

Personal Use of Social Media:

We recognize that many employees maintain personal, social media accounts. While [Organization Name] does not prohibit maintaining such personal accounts, [Organization Name] does prohibit employees from accessing and using personal, social media accounts at the office or by means of [Organization Name] electronic communications systems or equipment. Do not use [Organization Name] email addresses to register on social media sites or services for personal use, or even to post anonymously to social media sites as anonymous posts can be traced back to the original sender's email address. If you disclose your affiliation to [Organization Name], make it clear that you are speaking on your own behalf and that your post cannot be attributed to [Organization Name] or its partners; it is recommended that you also include a disclaimer that your views do not represent those of [Organization Name].

Conduct not Prohibited by this Policy:

This policy is not intended to restrict communications or actions protected or required by state or federal law, including protected, concerted activities, and it is not intended to regulate employees’ legal, after hours conduct.