

SAMPLE GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL NETWORKING, BLOGGING, & INTERNET CONNECTION BETWEEN SUPERVISING ADULTS AND STUDENTS

The following is a sample policy. It is highly encouraged that individual congregations adopt a similar that relates to their context, safe sanctuaries policies and values.

In general, our congregation views social networking sites (such as Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, and so forth) personal websites, and blogs in a positive light and respect the wishes of staff members and volunteers to use them as a medium for self-expression. If a paid staff member chooses to identify himself or herself as an employee of our congregation in these venues, we are aware that some readers may view this employee as a representative or spokesperson of the congregation. Considering this possibility, our congregation requires, as a condition of employment, which paid staff members observe the following guidelines when referring to the congregation, its programs and activities, its members, and other paid staff or volunteers, on social media, personal websites, or blogs. Furthermore, we highly recommend that volunteers at the congregation abide by these same guidelines.

- Staff/volunteers must be respectful in all communications and blogs related to or referencing the congregation, its members, and other staff members or volunteers.
- Staff/volunteers must not use obscenities, profanity, and vulgar language or images.
- Staff/volunteers should not use social media, personal websites, or blogs to disparage the congregation, members, or other staff members or volunteers.
- Staff/volunteers must not use social media, personal websites, or blogs to harass, bully, or intimidate others, particularly members of the congregation and other staff and volunteers. Behaviors that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, color, or disability; comments that are sexually suggestive, humiliating, or demeaning; and threats to stalk, haze, or physically injure another person.
- Staff/volunteers must not use social media, personal websites, or blogs to discuss engaging in conduct that is prohibited by congregational policies, including, but not limited to, the inappropriate or illegal use of alcohol, the use of illegal drugs, sexual behavior, sexual harassment, and bullying.
- Staff/volunteers must not post pictures of congregation members, other staff members, or volunteers without obtaining written permission.
- Staff/volunteers found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.