

Model Employee Social Networking Policy

Why you need this model policy:

This model policy will help you protect your practice from the potential threat posed by employee blogging, tweeting, Instagramming, and other social networking.

How this model policy helps you:

The key to protecting your practice is by implementing clear and specific policies to establish your right to discipline employees for social network abuses or, better yet, deter them from committing them in the first place.

How to use this model policy:

Customize this policy and use it at your law firm.

This material is for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of providing legal advice. You should always contact your attorney to determine if this information, and your interpretation of it, is appropriate to your particular situation

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Model Employee Social Networking Policy

Here's a Model Policy your firm can adapt to limit potentially harmful social networking activities by employees.

EMPLOYEE SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline acceptable and unacceptable use of any computer equipment and other technology by all "employees" (as defined below) of XYZ Law Firm ("XYZ") as such use relates to blogs and/or social networking websites. These rules and restrictions herein are in place for the protection of XYZ and its employees and clients.

1. Scope

a. Who This Policy Covers: This Policy applies to all permanent, probationary and temporary employees; contractors; consultants; and other workers at XYZ, collectively referred to as "employees."

b. What This Policy Covers: For purposes of this Policy, "social networking" refers to online interactions with individuals of common interests via chat, messaging, video, file sharing, blogs, texting, Twitter messaging, email, discussion groups and other methods on external social networks, including but not limited to sites open to all web users such as Facebook, MySpace and Bebo.

2. Prohibited and/or Restricted Uses

a. XYZ Owns Computer Equipment: All equipment and technology purchased or leased by XYZ (regardless of its location) that is accessed by its employees, including without limitation, computers, internet access, PDAs, is intended for work-related use only. Employees may not use any XYZ equipment or technology for personal purposes, including, but not limited to, maintaining, accessing or using a personal blog or social networking website.

b. No Social Networking during Work: While at the workplace during work hours, employees are expected to be working, not handling personal matters. Employees must keep their outside interests and activities, including, but not limited to, the maintenance, access or use of a personal blog or social networking website, outside the workplace.

c. No Negative Communications on Social Networks: Employee social networking communications, including, but not limited to, postings on blogs and social networking websites, must not negatively impact XYZ's reputation or standing in the community. Any communications that are insulting, demeaning, or offensive to XYZ, its employees, lawyers, referral sources, clients, or affiliates, or that XYZ otherwise deems harmful or damaging are a violation of this Policy.

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d. No Publication of Private or Confidential Information: Employee social networking communications must not include any information which XYZ deems is a trade secret or other sensitive or confidential information related to XYZ, its lawyers, employees, referral sources, or clients.

e. Social Networking Subject to Other Practice Policies: The content of employees' social networking communications must comply with all XYZ policies, including, without limitation, the Code of Conduct and any policies related to discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

3. Violation of this Policy

Any employee who violates this Policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal.

4. Acknowledgement

I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read and understood this Policy and promise not only to follow it in all key respects but also help to enforce it by reporting to my supervisor or the XYZ HR manager any or potential violations committed by other persons that I become aware of.

Name: _____

Date: _____