



### **Why does my business need a social media policy for staff?**

A social media policy educates your employees and sets down the ground rules. Employers need to set out what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, so that they have a case if someone breaches the policy. Explain to employees that they must behave professionally and that they shouldn't mix personal and business. They mustn't post comments about the company that don't represent the views of that firm or that could bring it into disrepute - even if they are tweeting or blogging in their own time.

A social media policy needs to also address employees who wish to create and/or maintain personal blogs or participate in social media may do so on their personal computer and on their own time outside of the workplace. Below are some examples of what should be included in an organization's social media policy.

- Each social media posting/blog of an employee must contain the following disclaimer: *"The views expressed on this web site/blog are the views of the author alone and do not reflect the views of said business"*;
- An employee must ensure that no confidential, proprietary, copyrighted, or other sensitive information related to your business appears on, or is referred to, on any social media site or blog, unless specific written permission has been obtained from the business owner;
- An employee must ensure that they do not libel, slander, intimidate, harass, or threaten any employee, customer, supplier or affiliate of your business on any social media site or in any blog content;
- An employee must not make comments which are negative, derogatory or false about your business, its employees, its management, its suppliers, its customers, its affiliates or its competitors on any social media site or in any blog content.

Having a social media policy helps you clearly explain the consequences of deviating from the rules and is an important element of your business's risk assurance. If an employee does breach the policy, you will be able to enforce any penalty stated in your guidelines.

For further information of what should be included in your business's social media policy, please contact Niagara Street HR Inc.