

## **Internet Social Network Policy**

### **Statement and Purpose of the Policy**

Homecare Services recognise and accepts that its employees may keep personal web logs (blogs) on the Internet and that Internet social networking sites are a useful way of interacting socially with colleagues and friends. While the organisation does not wish to discourage employees from accessing such sites on the Internet (whilst at work), nonetheless it expects certain standards of conduct to be observed to protect both its legitimate business interests and its employees from the dangers of inappropriate use. This policy applies both inside and, in certain circumstances, outside the workplace.

Examples of social networks include, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, and Instagram, these are just examples as there are many other forms of social networks.

### **1. In the workplace**

- Employees must not access social networking sites during working hours. Employees must not post information on a social networking site which is confidential to the organisation, its suppliers or clients.
- Employees must refrain from making reference on a social networking site to the organisation, its employees, its clients and its suppliers.
- Employees must not post entries on a social networking site which are derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive in any way, or which could bring the organisation into disrepute.
- Employees should be aware that blogs may create documents which the courts can order to be disclosed for use in litigation. Consequently, employees will be assumed to have written any contentious items unless they can prove definitively that they have not done so.
- The organisation will monitor its IT systems as is deemed necessary to prevent inappropriate usage. Hard copies of blog entries will be used in any disciplinary proceedings.

### **2. Outside the workplace**

- Employees must not make reference to the organisation, its clients or its employees on social networking sites.
- Offensive, defamatory or inappropriate comments about the organisation, its clients, suppliers or any of its employees that employees write on social networking sites will not be tolerated.
- Employees must not divulge confidential information about, or belonging to, the organisation, its clients or suppliers on social networking sites.

The above principles apply equally to information or comments posted by employees from their

home (or other personal) computers and irrespective of whether the posts are done during working hours or in the employee's own personal time.

### **Disciplinary action**

1. Employees whose conduct breaches this policy in any way may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the organisation's disciplinary procedure up to, and including, dismissal.
2. Any blog entries made inside or outside the workplace that are defamatory, derogatory, or discriminatory about the organisation, its clients, suppliers or employees will be investigated as gross misconduct. If substantiated, such conduct may lead to summary dismissal after the due process of the organisation's disciplinary procedure has been followed.

### **Document Control**

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