

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

POLICY MONITORING	
Person responsible for Policy	Chief Executive
Committee responsible for Review	Board of Trustees
Policy approved	21 November 2022; revised August 2023
Frequency of Review	3 years
Date of next Review	November 2025

1 Policy statement

Social media represents a vast online information sharing community. Lymphoma Action recognises both the benefits and the limits and risks of social media, particularly how it affects our engagement with stakeholders, reputation and our brand. As such this policy, which is not contractual, sets out our current protocols for the use of social media and applies to all employees and volunteers (including contractors, freelancers or any person acting on our behalf).

2 Purpose

- 2.1 Social media includes blogs, Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted, multimedia or user-generated media sites (YouTube, TikTok), social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) and virtual worlds. Social media is simply another form of communication. Anything said or done on social media will be treated in the same way as though it was in person and other Lymphoma Action policies will also apply.
- 2.2 Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites should be restricted to breaks during working hours.
- 2.3 We recognise the importance of employees joining in and helping to shape industry conversation and enhancing our image through blogging and interaction in social media. Therefore, where it is relevant to use social networking sites as part of the employee's position, this is acceptable.
- 2.4 However, inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of the Charity, even if it is not directly referenced. It should be noted that if comments/photographs are likely to be construed as linked to Lymphoma Action or, in more direct cases, if comments about colleagues, clients/service users or the Charity could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, we will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Employees should be aware that other organisations may read

employees' personal weblogs, to acquire information on our charity, its work, services and employee morale. Therefore, even if Lymphoma Action is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed. It is important to note that anyone who works at a charity can be quoted as 'an insider at Lymphoma Action' by the press, with or without permission.

3 General rules

- 3.1 To protect the Charity's interests, we ask that everyone complies with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to our employment or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours.
- 3.2 Contacts from any of our databases should not be downloaded and connected with on LinkedIn or other social networking sites with electronic address book facilities, unless this has been authorised.
- 3.3 Any blog that mentions the Charity, our employees, partners, service users or suppliers, should identify the author as a Lymphoma Action employee and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of the Charity.

Even if Lymphoma Action is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (for example – via a disclaimer statement such as: “The comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions of my employer.”) Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the Charity.

- 3.4 Any employee who is developing a site or writing a blog that will mention the Charity, our services, employees, partners, service users or suppliers must inform their manager that they are writing this and gain agreement before going 'live'.
- 3.5 We expect employees to be respectful about the Charity and our current or potential services, employees, partners, service users and suppliers, and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on our reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.
- 3.6 Photos or videos showing any employee or worker in clothing that includes our logo and that could reflect negatively on the employee, their job, their colleagues or the Charity should not be posted on social media; neither should photos, videos or sound recordings be taken on our property without explicit permission.
- 3.7 Comments posted by our employees on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise us in any way.
- 3.8 Inappropriate conversations with service users or supporters should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.

- 3.9 Any writing about, or displaying photos or videos, of internal activities that involves current employees, might be considered a breach of data protection and a breach of privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, their permission should be gained prior to uploading any such material. Details of any kind relating to any events, conversations, materials or documents that are meant to be private, confidential or internal to the organisation should not be posted. This includes manuals; procedures; training documents; databases; non-public financial or operational information; personal information regarding other employees or service users, supporters, suppliers and anything to do with a disciplinary case, grievance, allegation of bullying/harassment or discrimination, or legal issue; any other secret, confidential, or proprietary information or information that is subject to confidentiality agreements.
- 3.10 All employees must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on a Third Party's blog, post, feed or website). They may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by third parties, and any individual or company that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other employees can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.
- 3.11 Postings to websites or anywhere on the internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, should not breach copyright or other law or disclose confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about our organisation its service users, supporters or suppliers or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 3.12 Contacts by the media relating to the Charity, our employees, partners, service users or supporters, should be referred to the Communications Team (Communications@lymphoma-action.org.uk). All posting on behalf of Lymphoma Action on the Charities official social media channels must also be referred via the Comms Team unless the staff member or volunteer has been trained and given specific authorisation to manage a site, i.e. the closed Facebook Group. If there appears to be an enquiry of a serious nature a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) should also be made aware.
- 3.13 Employees who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving our employment to show that they are no longer employed by us.
- 3.14 Employees who manage Twitter, LinkedIn, or other social media/networking sites on behalf of the business must ensure that they inform us of their password(s) in line with our existing security measures for password sharing, so that these sites can be accessed and updated in their absence.
- 3.15 Employees who have left our employment must not post any inappropriate comments about the Charity or our employees on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or any other social media/networking sites.

- 3.16 Any contacts made on such sites during the course of employment will be classed as business information and thus belong to the organisation. Employees will be asked to disclose contacts on LinkedIn, or any other sites, that they have made in their capacity as an employee.
- 3.17 Note that we may from time to time monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with us.
- 3.18 Employees are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air business concerns or complaints: these should be raised with a manager or formally through our grievance procedure.
- 3.19 It is important to note that our service users, supporters, and suppliers contact details and information remain the property of the business. Upon leaving our employment, for any reason, direct contact from our existing or prospective supporters or service users should be directed to the CEO and any contacts gained whilst in our employment (including those on LinkedIn or any other networking platform) should not be used for any purposes that may be in competition with us. In addition, employees leaving our employment will be required to delete all work-related data including supporter contact details from any personal device/equipment.
- 3.20 Staff members may receive friend requests from contacts known to them through work. As a general rule of thumb, these should only be accepted where there is clearly a friend relationship such that would justify a connection outside of work. In many cases it may not be appropriate. In the case of professional networks (e.g., LinkedIn) a connection request may be accepted where it is from someone you know personally and whom you trust on a professional level. Staff should discuss with their line manager or a member of SMT if they are concerned about a social media connection request.
- 3.21 Should staff see anything of concern online they should flag this to their line manager or a member of SMT. For anything of a safeguarding nature, staff should contact our Designated Safeguarding Lead (currently our Director of Services).

4. Inappropriate comments by third parties

Sadly, there are people on social media who post derogatory and offensive comments. Should an inappropriate comment be added to one of our social media posts, we will take the following action to mitigate any reputational risk or impact on our community:

- 4.1 Make supporters who share their stories with us for social media aware of the risks using the following statement in our Media Consent Form: *“Your story is likely to reach a large number of people on social media, which is fantastic as it helps us raise much needed awareness of lymphoma. However, as we all know, there are certain people active on social media who aim to post derogatory and offensive comments. As much as we are not able to manage how those people choose to interact with our social media posts, we will aim to remove and report anything offensive as quickly as possible.”*

- 4.2 Hide any inappropriate comments as soon as possible and report them if we believe they constitute a breach of the social media platform’s community guidelines.
- 4.3 Block the commenter if appropriate.
- 4.4 We will not bow to pressure and take down a post that is subject to a large number of inappropriate comments, unless it becomes apparent that our wording or approach has been open to misinterpretation.

5 Breach of this policy

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in action being taken under our Disciplinary policy which could lead to dismissal. Where relevant the appropriate authorities may be notified.

6 Policy owner

This policy is owned by the Director of Fundraising and Communications and maintained by the HR and Governance Officer.

Revisions made to section 4 – August 2023.