

NEVIS ISLAND ADMINISTRATION

Social Media Policy

Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for Government employees on the use of social media while in the employ of the Nevis Island Administration. This policy applies to official use of social media on behalf of the Government and non-official personal use by all Government employees. These two types of social media use are as follows:

- 1) Official use – Social media engagement on behalf of the Government as authorized by the Government or of sites where the Government has an official website presence and terms of service agreement.
- 2) Non-official /Personal use – Personal day to day use of social media sites by Government employees, not related to official duties.

Defining Social Media

For the purpose of this policy, social media covers tools and technologies that allow a social media user to share information or participate in social networking, including but not limited to:

- Blogs (e.g. Twitter, Tumblr)
- Social Networks (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+)
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Instagram, Flickr)
- Online forums
- Discussion boards and automated data feeds
- Whatsapp or other text of messaging services

Policy Objective

- 1) To encourage the appropriate, effective, official and professional use of social media by Government employees for **Government purposes**.
- 2) To encourage the appropriate individual/personal use of social media by Government employees.
- 3) To ensure that the use of social media by Government employees complies with all applicable rules and all Government policies and guidelines, including those related to protection of privacy, confidentiality, security and internet and email use.

Policy Directives

All Government employees of the Nevis Island Administration are required to comply with the rules and regulations that apply to online communications at all times, regardless of whether they are at work, outside the office or using Government's equipment or personal equipment. These rules and restrictions, which speak to proper use of social media are found in the St Christopher and Nevis Statutory Rules and Orders No 9 of 2014 – "Public Service (Conduct and Ethics of Officers) Code, Sections 38, 53 and 54, and the Nevis Island Administration Government Policy and Guidelines. These rules and this policy apply to Government employees whether writing in their own name or under any other profile or identity:

- 1) Employees of the Nevis Island Administration shall not post on social media, comment on, or disclose confidential information on matters concerning the Government - Ministries, Departments, Branch, Unit, Division, Agency in which they are employed, or information which comes to their knowledge solely by virtue of their employment, unless authorized to do so by the proper authority.
- 2) All Government employees will be held accountable for what they post online, even when using a disclaimer.
- 3) Inappropriate conduct or comment on social media which may bring disrepute to the Government or Government employees may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Statutory Rules and Orders 10 of 2014 – "Public Service Code of Discipline" Section 7.
- 4) Government employees shall not engage in criminal or dishonest conduct on social media.
- 5) Employees of the Nevis Island Administration shall not use any Government site to engage in any matter affecting their own financial interest or that of their family, friends or other acquaintances.
- 6) When employees are on duty, standard ethical conduct requires that they use official time in an honest effort to perform their duties and shall not engage or participate in social media activities unless authorized to do so.
- 7) In accordance with the St Christopher and Nevis Statutory Rules and Orders No. 9 of 2014 – "Public Service (Conduct and Ethics of Officers) Code" Sections 38, 53 and 54, all Government employees shall not:
 - a) Use a Government owned social media account in your official capacity to engage in political activity at anytime.
 - b) Tweet, retweet, share, like, or comment on a post or content that has political overtones.
 - c) Engage in any political activity via social media while on duty, in the workplace or outside of the workplace.
 - d) Make partisan or political comments while speaking or writing on social media inside or outside of the workplace during their tenure as a Government employee.
- 8) Engage in any harassment on social media (sexual or non-sexual), since this is prohibited in any work-related or non-work-related situation, during or outside of normal working hours.

Non-compliance with or failure to follow the Statutory Rules and Orders and the Administration's policy, procedures and guidelines while using social media, or any other action that violates applicable rules or policy, shall result in disciplinary action, in accordance with the St Christopher and Nevis 2014 Statutory Rules and Orders.

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