

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

**POLICY STATEMENT:** The Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates recognize that in today's environment, with the increasing prevalence of the internet, employees, clerics, and volunteers will use the internet to conduct ministerial work and to communicate with associates and friends. The internet provides various ways for individuals to interact and has changed the way we communicate and share information. The Diocese of Oakland views the internet as an important educational and evangelizing tool to promote school and ministerial programs. The Diocese encourages administrators, pastors and principals to support internet use and to give employees, clerics and volunteers the necessary training and tools to interact safely and responsibly online. However, those using the internet should bear in mind that certain comments and information may have a harmful effect on the Diocese of Oakland, its reputation, and its employees. In light of this possibility, employees, clerics, and volunteers are required to adhere to the following policy regarding the use of Personal and Ministry Websites, including social networks and blogs.

### **DEFINITIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY:**

**Ministry Website:** an internet page, blog, or any website/tool created by employees, clerics, or volunteers for the sole purpose of conducting Diocesan/Affiliate ministry.

**Personal Website:** an internet page, blog, or any website/tool created by employees, clerics, or volunteers primarily to share personal communication with friends and associates.

**Blog:** a type of website, usually maintained by an individual, the primary purpose of which is to offer commentary or news on events, or subjects, (e.g., Church teaching, theology, morals, etc.). Types of blogs include audio, video, photo, and 'micro-blogs.'

**Supervisor:** the hiring and/or supervising agent: for parish staff, the pastor; for parish volunteers, the appropriate administrator (e.g., Director of Religious Education or Director of Youth Ministry); for school personnel, the principal.

**Employee:** any person who is employed by the Diocese of Oakland or an Affiliate. An employee may be a cleric, a lay person, or a member of a Religious institute.

**Cleric:** an ordained priest or deacon who is incardinated in the Diocese of Oakland, as well as a Religious priest or deacon, or a priest or deacon incardinated in another diocese, who is engaged in a ministry under the control or auspices of the Diocese of Oakland or an Affiliate.

**Adult:** an individual who is eighteen years of age or older.

**Child:** a person under 18 years of age or a physically or mentally disabled person under 21 years of age.

**Volunteer:** an adult who works without financial or material gain on behalf of the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates, who is not an employee or a cleric (for example, an intern, catechist, scout leader, coach, student teacher, or others in similar capacities).

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Ministry Websites**

The Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates support the creation of Ministry Websites as a means to conduct Diocesan/Affiliate ministry. The use of Ministry Websites is encouraged when conducting Diocesan/Affiliate educational and evangelizing programs. Supervisors who approve individuals to create a Ministry Website for dispersal of information are responsible for monitoring the Ministry Website.

Official Ministry Websites must abide by copyright, fair use, and applicable IRS financial disclosure regulations. There should be at least two adult site-administrators for each to allow for rapid response and continuous monitoring of the site. Passwords and names of sites should be registered in a central location and more than one adult should have access to this information.

### **Personal Websites**

Employees, clerics, or volunteers who maintain Personal Websites (i.e. not originating from a Diocesan, parish, or school computer or network) must recognize that anything published on a Personal Website is no different than making information available in a public forum. Any information on a personal Website that causes or has the potential to cause embarrassment to the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates (including parishes and/or schools) is prohibited by this policy and must be avoided. The same boundaries that apply to a “Ministry Website” apply to anything posted on a Personal Website.

Employees, clerics, and volunteers are strongly discouraged from using Personal Websites to conduct Diocesan/Affiliate ministry activities. Any use of a Personal Website in such fashion must be approved in advance by their supervisor or designee. In the event a Personal Website conducts Diocesan/Affiliate ministry activities, there should be no expectation of privacy as to the contents of such website, which is subject to monitoring by their supervisor or designee at any time.

### **Password-Protected Sites**

Both Ministry Websites and Personal Websites may involve the use of a username/password or other such means to access all or portions of the site. In the event that a cleric, employee, or volunteer, subject to approval by the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliate, gives a child access to a Website that is not otherwise openly accessible to the public, that same access must also be provided to the child’s parent/guardian, if the parent/guardian so desires.

### **Ministry Blogs**

The Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates support the use of blogging as a ministry communication tool. It is an excellent platform for creating and distributing information. Although blogging is a powerful communication tool, Ministry Blogs may not be used for: 1) conducting outside business 2) defaming the character of any individual or institution 3) causing

embarrassment to the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates 4) violating any privacy or confidentiality agreements, or 5) divulging any personal information about children that would jeopardize their safety or well-being in any way.

### **Personal Blogs**

In the event an employee or cleric identifies himself/herself as, or is manifestly understood to be, an employee or cleric of the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates on a Personal Blog (or other website with a similar purpose), to help reduce the potential for confusion, the employee is required to put the following notice in a reasonably prominent place on the website: **“The views expressed on this website are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer.”** Even with this notice, any information that causes or has the potential to cause embarrassment to the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates should be avoided.

Please note that these boundaries for blog communications are also applicable for website communications as well.

### **Confidential and Proprietary Information**

Employees, clerics, and volunteers are prohibited from disclosing via the internet information that is understood to be held in confidence by the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates. Employees, clerics, and volunteers are prohibited from disclosing via the internet any information that is proprietary to the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates, except by explicit written permission of the appropriate authority.

### **Trademarks and Logos**

Employees, clerics, and volunteers may use Diocesan or Affiliate trademarks or logos on Personal Websites only in ways that clearly promote or call positive attention to Diocesan events, websites or organizations associated with the trademark or logo. Employees, clerics, and volunteers may not use Diocesan or Affiliate trademarks or logos on their Personal Websites in any way that could reasonably suggest Diocesan or Affiliate sponsorship or agreement with any views expressed.

### **Inappropriate Language and Images**

The Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates will not tolerate employees, clerics, or volunteers posting obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory, defamatory, or otherwise potentially scandalous comments, links and/or images which reflect discredit or cause embarrassment to the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliates, employees, vendors, partners, agencies, schools and others.

### **Right to Review**

Those utilizing the Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates computer equipment and network (such as through a Ministry Website) should not have an expectation of privacy as to such use. These computers are the property of the Diocese of Oakland or its Affiliate and are provided for business-related purposes only. These computers may be monitored or searched as necessary to assure they are being used in a professional and prudent manner.

In addition, if a cleric, employee or volunteer utilizes a personal computer or other computer not networked to the Diocese of Oakland or an Affiliate (such as to create a Personal Website), there is no reasonable expectation of privacy insofar as the personal computer is being utilized for Diocesan or affiliate-related business. Such personal computers may be monitored or searched if there are reasonable grounds for believing this policy, or any other policy, of the Diocese of Oakland is being violated through such personal computer (or Personal Website).

### **Protection of Children**

Employees, clerics and volunteers of the Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates will comply with all aspects of the *Children's Online Privacy Protection Act* (<http://www.ftc.gov/ogc/coppa1.htm>) and the *Diocesan Code of Conduct Involving Interactions with Minors in the Diocese of Oakland* (<http://www.oakdiocese.org/ministries/safe-environment/code-of-conduct-august-2013>).

### **Diocesan Technology Acceptable Use Policy**

The Diocese of Oakland recognizes the various ways, both positive and negative, that Diocesan Pastoral Staff, parish children, parents, volunteers can use technology both in parish and at home. Pastoral Staffs, parish children, parents and volunteers should always strive to use technology in a responsible and ethical way as they work toward becoming or modeling responsible citizens of our global community.

Employees, clerics and volunteers are forbidden to post or distribute personal identifiable information including pictures of any child under the age of eighteen without verifiable consent of a parent or guardian. Personal identifiable information includes full name, photos, home address, email address, telephone number, or any information that would allow someone to identify or contact a child. Verifiable consent can take the form of a release/permission form that includes use of photographs, or an email from a parent or guardian. The Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates will review alleged violations of the *Children's Online Privacy Protection Act* or the *Diocesan Code of Conduct Involving Interaction with Minors in the Diocese of Oakland* on a case-by-case basis. In the event that a provision of this Social Media Policy cannot be reconciled with the *Diocesan Code of Conduct Involving Interactions with Minors in the Diocese of Oakland*, the provisions of the *Diocesan Code of Conduct Involving Interactions with Minors in the Diocese of Oakland* will be in force.

### **Enforcement**

The Diocese of Oakland, its Affiliates, and their respective administrators intend to enforce the policy set forth here and expect all employees, clerics, and volunteers to comply. Failure to comply with any of the provisions of the Social Media Policy will be grounds for discipline, up to and including termination, if an employee or cleric, or removal from position, if a volunteer. Reports of alleged infractions or questions regarding content can be made to the Director of Human Resources at the Diocesan Chancery or the Diocesan Communications Director.

The Diocese of Oakland and its Affiliates reserve the right to make changes to this policy at any time and at its sole discretion, and interpret and administer the policy in light of changing circumstances and events.

The Diocese of Oakland acknowledges the *Social Media Guidelines* of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/comm/social-media-guidelines.shtml>.

The Diocese of Oakland gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the Dioceses of Baltimore and Cincinnati in granting the use of its social networking policies and guidelines as a resource in the development of this policy.

### **Computer and Internet Use Policy**

The Diocese of Oakland provides various electronic communication and technology resources to its employees to assist them in performing their job duties. Occasionally, some employees may also use their own electronic communication and technology resources for Diocesan business purposes. Employees using the Diocese's electronic communication and technology resources, and those who use their own electronic communication and technology resources in the course of their work for the Diocese, must do so in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy. Failure to follow Diocesan policy regarding use of electronic communication and technology resources may lead to disciplinary measures, up to and including termination of employment.

**Definition of Electronic Communication and Technology Resources.** Electronic communication and technology resources consist of all electronic devices and means of electronic communication including, but not limited to, computers and related hardware and peripheral devices, computer software applications and associated files and data, the Internet, electronic mail, telephones, voicemail, PDAs, cell phones and pagers.

**Ownership and Authorized Use.** All electronic communication and technology resources provided to employees by the Diocese are owned by, or licensed to the Diocese of Oakland. The Diocese grants access to its electronic communication and technology resources at its discretion, generally granting access when the resources in question will assist an employee in performing his or her job.

Employees may generally use Diocesan electronic communication and technology resources only for the purpose of conducting Diocesan business. Employees may make incidental use of Diocesan electronic communication and technology resources (consisting of brief and occasional personal communications, and brief personal use of the Internet during meal times or other breaks) for personal purposes if such use does not impair their performance of their job duties and does not otherwise violate any Diocesan policy.

At the conclusion of their employment, employees must return to the Diocese all electronic communication and technology resources provided to them by the Diocese which were not returned previously.

**Improper Uses.** Employees cannot use Diocesan electronic communication and technology resources in any manner which is inconsistent with the law, Diocesan policy or the best interests of the Diocese. Under no circumstances may an employee use the Diocese's electronic

communication and technology resources to transmit, receive, or store any information that is in violation of any Diocesan policy as contained in the Employee Personnel Handbook.

**Company Access to Electronic Communication and Technology Resources; No Right of Privacy.** All data, information and messages sent, received or stored on the Diocese of Oakland's electronic communication and technology resources is the property of the Diocese, regardless of content. As such, the Diocese reserves the right to access all data, information and messages sent, received or stored on its electronic communication and technology resources at any time and for any reason, with or without notice to employees.

Certain of the Diocese's electronic communication and technology resources can be accessed by a user only after entering a password. Passwords are intended to prevent unauthorized access to information. Passwords do not confer a right of privacy upon any employee, however. As a result, even though employees may maintain passwords for accessing electronic communication and technology resources, employees must not expect that any information maintained on those resources, including electronic-mail and voicemail messages, is private. Employees have no right of privacy with respect to any data or information sent, received or stored on Diocesan electronic communication and technology resources, including personal information or messages. Employees must not share passwords and must not access coworkers' systems without express authorization.

**The Internet.** The Diocese provides certain employees with access to the Internet. Employees may generally use the Internet only for the purpose of conducting Diocesan business, except employees may make incidental use of the Internet for personal purposes during meal times or other breaks if such use does not impair their performance of their job duties and does not otherwise violate any Diocesan policy

Employees may not access, download or distribute material or information that violates any Diocesan policy. This Diocese may, in its discretion, use a filtering or other system to limit access to inappropriate materials and web sites.

**Software Use.** Employees are prohibited from installing or deleting software on Diocesan computers without the prior permission of the MIS (Management Information Systems) Department. Employees are not permitted to make copies of software owned by the Diocese or to give Diocesan software to other persons. Software owned by employees may be used for Diocesan business purposes only if approval is first obtained from the MIS Director and the license and proof of purchase are kept at the employee's workstation, and a copy given to the MIS Director.

**Confidential Information.** The Diocese of Oakland is very sensitive to the protection of confidential information. Any Confidential Information transmitted via electronic communication and technology resources should be marked with the following confidentiality legend:

"This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If you are not the named addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete this e-mail from your system. If you

are not the intended recipient you are notified that disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited."

**Security.** The Diocese of Oakland has installed a variety of programs and devices to ensure the safety and security of its electronic communication and technology resources. Employees must not tamper with, alter, disable or remove any security devices or software on Diocesan electronic communication and technology resources.

**Use of Electronic Communication and Technology Resources Owned by Employees.** The Diocese recognizes that employees may possess certain electronic communication and technology resources and may occasionally use such resources in the performance of their job duties. Employees who utilize their own electronic communication and technology resources in the course of their work for the Diocese must do so in a manner consistent with Diocesan policies.

All data, information and messages sent, received, created or stored by an employee in the course of his or her work for the Diocese and loaded onto any computer owned by the employee must be deleted from the employee's computer at the conclusion of the employee's employment with the Diocese of Oakland.