



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR PASTORS, EMPLOYEES AND MEMBERS OF THE APOSTOLIC FAITH MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA (AFM) NOVEMBER 2017

WHY SHOULD THERE BE A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR THE AFM?

All AFM pastors, employees and members have the responsibility to manage the AFM'S reputation online. We are a church of members, ... pastors and ... assemblies and it has become essential in an age of increasing social media activity, to protect the name and stature of the church by putting a social media policy in place. If an individual's social media activity is linked to, or is perceived to be linked to the AFM, we have a legitimate interest in the contents posted.

This policy will protect the AFM, its pastors and its employees from any possible action or threat taken against us and ensure that all platforms of social media are used in a professional manner.

Do know the AFM Pastoral Code of Conduct and the Social Media Policy. Make sure you are familiar with the content. It provides a framework to guide you in your dealings with your colleagues, other employees of the AFM and any person related to the AFM.

This policy must be read and understood by all pastors and employees.

Any reference to "employee" in this policy is deemed to also include contractors and others who provide services to the AFM.

Personal use of social media is related to the AFM when you post information regarding the AFM or your job/role/service you provide at the AFM.

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO APPROACH SOCIAL MEDIA?

Always use sound judgement and common sense. -If you can't put in on a poster in a public place, don't post it on social media.

THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU POST

Everything you do online affects your and the AFM'S reputation.

Whether in your own capacity or on the AFM'S behalf, conduct yourself professionally in every instance.

Be mindful when posting, because what you have posted will be in the public space for a very long time. Your post can be screen grabbed, published elsewhere and multiplied immediately.

SOCIAL MEDIA BEHAVIOUR

Always represent yourself, or the AFM with integrity and ethically. Do not discredit anyone, or the AFM in your personal capacity.

The AFM reflects a diverse set of cultures, values and viewpoints which must be respected. Don't be afraid to express yourself, but do so respectfully.

Be polite. When entering a social media system, you should behave the same as in any other social environment. Good manners apply, don't be rude.



Don't intrude in or interrupt the conversations of others.

Introduce yourself. Don't pretend to be someone else, or use a fake username or a username you are not authorized to use.

If you are unsure if your behavior is acceptable, ask yourself if you would be happy if someone else does the same to you, if not, review your behavior.

WHAT MUST NOT BE DONE ONLINE?

Don't speak on behalf of the AFM. If you notice that someone who is not a spokesperson has posted something, bring it to the attention of your pastor, or Regional Leader.

Don't post or discuss internal, or confidential information online, whether it is a local AFM assembly, regional or national AFM business matter or personal.

Don't disclose any personal or sensitive information regarding an employee or anyone related to the AFM online.

Don't speculate on anything the AFM has not officially announced. Information leaks and misunderstanding can damage the AFM'S reputation.

Don't engage in online disputes or make comments regarding the AFM that may be insulting, or inappropriate, or may be damaging to the AFM'S reputation.

If you have an AFM email address, don't use it on any social media platform.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE LAW

Think before you tweet and, or retweet. There are liabilities and risks with retweeting. The law is designed to protect against the spreading of false and defamatory rumours. Retweeting a defamatory or false post could get you into trouble.

Respect copyright and fair use laws. You must comply with all laws governing copyright, or fair use of copyrighted material owned by someone else.

When expressing an opinion, your profile should clearly indicate that the opinion you express on a social media platform, is your own opinion and not that of the AFM. You can state "views are my own and not that of the AFM".

Be aware that such a disclaimer has no legal effect, should you post anything that might be harmful to the AFM'S reputation.

WHAT IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE TO POST ON A SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM?

Discriminatory or derogatory comments.

Racist comments.

Confidential or sensitive information.

Adverse comments about the AFM, its employees or anyone related to the AFM.

Disparaging comments. E.g. Against other Religious organizations and churches.

Anything that may bring the AFM into disrepute.

The AFM reserves the right to request a pastor, an employee, or a member to remove certain posts and inappropriate comments from social media platforms.

CONSEQUENCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

Any social media activity or behavior by pastors, employees, or members which brings the AFM into disrepute is in breach of this policy and could lead to disciplinary proceedings and/or dismissal.



The Following Facebook Comment Guidelines are placed as is on our Official Facebook Page:

FACEBOOK COMMENT GUIDELINES

Dear Member. This is the official Facebook page of The Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa. We see a church accessible to all people, celebrating our unity and God-given diversity. We empower our members to care for and transform their communities to the glory of God missionally. We welcome respectful comments that make a positive contribution to this vision.

LANGUAGE

The official language of the AFM National Office is English. We see language as a tool to get the Gospel of Jesus Christ across. Language is not an end, but just a mechanism to share meaning across a diverse AFM membership base. We acknowledge and respect the fact that all 11 official languages of South Africa can be found in our local assemblies – and we celebrate that diversity! However, to ensure that we include all our members on this page we will be sharing stories and information in English. You are welcome to respond in your mother-tongue language.

THE FOCUS OF THIS PAGE

The main focus of this page is on the fruit and results of the Great Commission. Our intent is to share practical stories that demonstrate the effect of becoming a Missional Movement. It gives us the opportunity to tell the stories of our local AFM assemblies and members and their impact on their local communities.

WHAT WE WILL NOT ALLOW

Please note that this page will not be used to enquire or discuss doctrinal, ethical or liturgical issues. Such matters are dealt with by the office of the General Secretary of the AFM of SA. If you have an enquiry regarding such a matter, please send an e-mail enquiry to the Office of the General Secretary: viewpoint@afm-ags.org

We reserve the right to remove comments or ban a member from this page under the following circumstances:

- **We will not allow disrespectful comments.** The AFM reflects a diverse set of cultures, values and viewpoints which must be respected. Relationships are one of the AFM's values. Don't be afraid to express yourself but do so respectfully.
- **We will not allow comments that resemble complaints.** Our Facebook page focus on the work and the impact of the Great Commission and our Missional intent. If you need to lay a complaint kindly use the proper internal channels provided by the church. This is not the platform for laying complaints.
- **We will not allow politically-driven comments or agendas.** Again the focus of this page is to celebrate and witness the impact of the church and its members in local communities. For enquiries regarding doctrinal, ethical or liturgical matters please use the following e-mail address to direct your question: viewpoint@afm-ags.org
- **We will not allow comments that clearly do not relate to the post.** Keep comments on-topic and feedback relevant to the original post that was shared.

It is not our intention to moderate every single comment. Members who do not keep to these guidelines will unfortunately be banned from the page to allow the church to continue sharing testimonies and stories of impact.

Thank you for respecting these guidelines.