



DIOCESE OF GALLUP

711 SOUTH PUERCO DRIVE

P.O. Box 1338 • Gallup, New Mexico 87305 • Telephone (505) 863-4406

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Effective Date: November 30, 2015

The Diocese of Gallup recognizes the importance of employees, clerics, and volunteers engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in online environments. The Diocese views social networking and the use of social media as an important educational and evangelizing tool to conduct ministry work, communicate with associates and students, and promote school and ministerial programs. The Diocese therefore encourages administrators, pastors, and principals to support internet use and to give employees, clerics, and volunteers the necessary and ongoing training and tools to interact safely and responsibly online.

Online communication can take many forms, including but not limited to the creation and/or use of internet forums, blogs, online profiles, wikis, podcasts, e-mail, and instant messaging. Examples of social media sites include LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, and Tumblr.

While the Diocese encourages the use of the internet, there are inherent risks to online communication. Information shared online has the potential to be harmful to the Diocese, its reputation, and its employees. In recognition of both the benefits and the potential ramifications arising from the use of online communication and social media, the Diocese has developed this policy to foster the responsible and appropriate use of online resources. Employees, clerics, and volunteers of both the Diocese of Gallup and the Parishes and schools within the Diocese are required to adhere to this policy, and references herein to "employees, clerics, and volunteers" include all such persons. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in discipline up to and including termination or dismissal.

General Guidelines

Employees, clerics, and volunteers should recognize that when they participate in social networking or utilize social media, they may be perceived as representing the Diocese, as well as themselves, even if that is not the intention. As information published online can be continuously re-copied and posted on other sites without your knowledge, what you do online can follow you for a long period of time. The Diocese cautions employees, clerics, and volunteers to avoid engaging in activity that could damage the reputation or the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, the Diocese, its parishes, schools, employees, clerics, or volunteers. Electronic communications and use of social media by individuals associated with the Diocese should reflect Catholic values.

Diocese employees, clerics, and volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines:

- To the extent possible, all electronic communication regarding Diocese-related matters, including communication with students and minors, should be accomplished through Diocese-provided devices and networks. To that end, employees, clerics, and volunteers must use their Diocese e-mail accounts and/or Diocese-approved websites and social media sites to conduct Diocesan business or ministry. Use of personal e-mail accounts, websites, or social media sites to advertise official Diocese programs or conduct Diocesan business or ministry is prohibited unless preapproved by the Diocese.
- Employees, clerics, and volunteers should refrain from accessing or using social media sites on working time unless it is for legitimate, professional, and job-related purposes authorized by the Diocese. Employees, clerics, and volunteers should exercise sound judgment to prevent social media sites from becoming a distraction at work. Employees, clerics, and volunteers are not to create, post, or otherwise access social media sites for personal use during normal Diocesan working hours.
- Employees, clerics, and volunteers may not disclose or transmit in social media, or otherwise, confidential or proprietary information gained as a result of their association with the Diocese, unless such disclosure is expressly authorized by the Diocese.
- Employees, clerics, and volunteers have no privacy in the use of Diocese owned, operated, or provided electronic devices (including but not limited to computers, cell phones, tablets, and fax machines), e-mail accounts, or electronic communications transmitted via the Diocese's electronic network. The Diocese reserves the right to access, review, and monitor – consistent with applicable laws – all documents, messages, and information displayed, submitted, or transmitted via its electronic systems and networks without notice.
- In the event employees, clerics, and volunteers post or access information online (e.g. in social media or in a blog), and in any way identify their association with the Diocese, they must clearly state that the views expressed do not reflect the views of the Diocese or the Catholic Church. Employees, clerics, and volunteers are encouraged to state: “The views expressed on this site are solely my own and do not reflect the view of the Diocese of Gallup or the Catholic Church.” Even with this statement, employees and volunteers may still be held accountable for offensive material.
- Employees, clerics, and volunteers shall not use Diocesan or affiliate trademarks, logos, copyrighted material, or proprietary material on personal websites, blogs, or social networking sites in a way that could reasonably suggest Diocesan sponsorship or agreement with any of the views expressed. Employees, clerics, and volunteers may use Diocesan or affiliate trademarks, logos, copyrighted material, or proprietary material only with the permission of the Diocese and only to call positive attention to Diocesan events, websites, or organizations.

- Employees, clerics, and volunteers shall not create, generate, retrieve, receive, or send any offensive information via social media or social networking sites, including but not limited to communications of an offensive sexual nature, racial slurs, derogatory comments, communications that reflect, discredit, or cause embarrassment to the Diocese, and communications that are disrespectful or discriminatory toward a person's age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religious or political beliefs, national origin, ancestry, disability, or any other protected characteristic. In the case of a disputed communication, the Diocese reserves the right to rule on whether a message or statement is offensive.

Ministry Websites, Blogs, and Social Media Sites

The Diocese supports the creation of ministry-related websites, blogs, and social media sites. Any online site that will be identified as associated with the Diocese must be approved by the Director of the Diocese's Office of Communications. In addition, at least two employees of the Diocese must be given full administrative rights and access to any such site (including username and password information). Content on such sites is to be strictly in keeping with the teachings of the Church and the Diocese. Such sites are subject to regular review by the Diocese, and the Diocese may at any time request that information be removed or posted on the site, or that the site be discontinued. If the site creator, author, or editor refuses to remove content from the site, appropriate action will be taken.

Contact with and Protection of Minors

The Diocese is committed to the pursuit of keeping children safe. The Diocese recognizes that children have a right to a safe environment in their home, school, and parish – a right which extends to their online communications with the church. Accordingly, in engaging in online communications with children, Diocese employees, clerics, and volunteers must adhere to the following guidelines:

- When communicating with minors online, employees, clerics, and volunteers must use only their Diocesan email accounts or Diocesan-approved websites. In the event an individual does not have a Diocesan e-mail account or access to a Diocesan-approved website, a private e-mail account may be used to communicate with minors, but only with preapproval from the Diocese. Any time a private e-mail account is used, however, the employee, cleric, or volunteer's immediate supervisor must be copied on the communication. Parents or guardians of minors must be copied on all communications with minors.

- Employees, clerics, and volunteers may communicate with minors through text messaging if necessary. Under such circumstances, both the minor's parent or guardian and the employee's, cleric's, or volunteer's immediate supervisor must be copied on the communication.

- Employees, clerics, and volunteers should not allow minors access to their personal devices – including phones, computers, and tablets – without direct supervision. While accessing or using an employee’s, cleric’s, or volunteer’s personal device, minors are prohibited from accessing their own or the employee’s, cleric’s, or volunteer’s personal e-mail accounts, websites, or social media sites.

- The Diocese does not take a position on an employee’s, cleric’s, or volunteer’s decision to participate in social networking for personal use on personal time. If an employee, cleric, or volunteer chooses to do so, he or she should not communicate with or initiate or accept social media requests, including friend requests, from current or former students under the age of 18. This guideline should not be read to prohibit employee, cleric, or volunteer participation in Diocese-approved online groups or social media sites through which students have requested the participation of the employee, cleric, or volunteer.

- Employees, clerics, and volunteers of the Diocese may provide a minor access to a Diocese-approved website not open to the public, which requires a username or password to access. In the event a minor is given such access, the minor’s parent or guardian must likewise be given access to the site.

- Employees, clerics, and volunteers of the Diocese may not distribute, post, or transmit personal identifying information, including contact information (address, email, phone number), photos, or videos, of any minor under the age of 18 without written consent of the minor’s parent or guardian.

Employees, clerics, or volunteers who violate the above guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Compromised Information and Security

The Diocese recognizes that external forces can cause a website, social media site, or online account to be compromised or rendered untrustworthy. Employees, clerics, and volunteers will not be held responsible for communications carried out by a third party in the case of a hacked or compromised website, social media site, or account, provided that the following steps and precautions are promptly taken:

- Document any account breaches, and then remove any offending posts or inappropriate content;

- Change account passwords, and take all other necessary steps to ensure that the website, social media site, or account is once again secure; and

- Notify an immediate supervisor of the breach of the account, identifying any individual affected by resulting malicious account postings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF SOCIAL MEDIAL POLICY

I _____, acknowledge my receipt of the Diocese of Gallup's Social Media Policy. I understand that the Diocese of Gallup reserves the right to modify, withdraw, or suspend its policy at any time. By signing below, I verify that I have read the policy, understand its provisions, and agree to abide by the policy. By signing below I further acknowledge that failure to follow the policy may result in appropriate discipline up to and including dismissal.

Signature

Date