

# Social Media Guidelines



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## **Using Social Media**

The Connecticut Bar Association (“CBA”) employs social media strategies as part of its member communications. Social media easily and inexpensively allows an association to remain relevant and to interact with its members and the public and can facilitate member-to-member dialogue. Social networks offer opportunities for outreach, information sharing, and interaction.

The CBA supports the use of these Internet technologies to increase member engagement, build community, and improve access to information, resulting in greater value to our members and the public. These tools are another method to communicate with a variety of audiences, but may not be appropriate in all instances nor for all kinds of outreach.

The following guidelines apply to the CBA’s sections and committees (“Entities”) wishing to use CBA’s name and/or graphic identity (e.g., logo) in conjunction with the creation or maintenance of a social media presence that identifies the Entity as being sponsored by, administered by, or affiliated with the CBA.

## **Objectives**

Entities considering social media should be committed to long-term goals, as social media is a strategy used for long-term awareness and relationship building. Consider the goals you seek to achieve with social media participation. How will you, or how can you, measure the success of your social media activity? If you are going to invest resources in social media sites, you must be prepared to give good reason for that investment.

## **Administering the Social Media Site**

In order to start a social media page, an Entity must receive the approval from the section or committee chair, who then must receive approval from the president of the CBA (or his/her designee).

Each Entity desiring a social media presence will work with a staff liaison/contact (the Communications Department) to determine the Entity’s objectives and the proper social media venues for the Entity.

In conjunction with the staff liaison, a page for the Entity will be created. The Entity will then designate a member to be responsible for the page’s content management whenever contents and changes are appropriate. The Entity will also implement proper guidelines for continuity of the page from year to year, as leadership changes with the start of each bar year. The CBA, however, reserves the right to remove any content deemed inappropriate or not in keeping with these guidelines. Entities are responsible for complying with these guidelines.

## **Guidelines for Social Networking—Top Ten Do’s and Don’ts:**

Represent the CBA and our profession well. Exercise good judgment. Entities who fail to do so, or who fail to comply with these guidelines, may forfeit the right to participate in social networking activities sponsored by the CBA.

1. **Be responsible.** The Entity is personally responsible for the material you post. Carefully consider content; what you publish will be widely accessible for some time and, in some cases, indefinitely. All statements must be true and not misleading. Do not post private information about yourself or others. Keep the posts relevant to the CBA’s mission and/or goals. Adhere to all statutory prescriptions and **Rules of Professional Conduct** governing the privacy of individuals and confidential information of your clients.
2. **Be civil and respectful.** It’s alright to disagree with others in posts, but do not use defamatory, libelous, or damaging innuendo; abusive, threatening, offensive, obscene, explicit, or racist language; or post illegal material.
3. **Be quick to correct an error.** If you make a mistake, admit it. Quickly provide the correct information. If appropriate, modify an earlier post to make it clear that you have corrected an error.
4. **Follow copyright and fair use laws.** Always give people proper credit for their work. Make sure you have the right to use material with attribution before publishing. It is a good practice to link to others’ work rather than reproducing it on your site. When in doubt as to the proprietary nature of material, don’t use it. Recognize the potential professional and legal consequences of any failure to follow applicable laws governing the use of others’ material.
5. **Protect proprietary information.** Do not discuss or misuse proprietary or confidential information, and follow all professional and ethical rules governing the disclosure of information shared with you by clients. When in doubt, leave it out.
6. **Avoid politics.** Even if political endorsements are not specifically forbidden by Court Rule or your Association bylaws, political endorsements or advocacy positions should be avoided unless they reflect official policy. (Consider whether advocacy in this context fits with the goals of your social media presence, however.)
7. **Comply with Connecticut rules governing lawyer conduct.** Comply with all legal restrictions and obligations governing professional conduct, particularly those regulating communication and advertising when posting content to any social network, including postings by an Entity.
8. **Comply with antitrust laws.** Antitrust laws prohibit postings that encourage or facilitate agreements between CBA members of different firms concerning the following, as they pertain to legal services: prices, discounts, or terms or conditions of sale; salaries; profits, profit margins, or cost data; market shares, sales territories, or

markets; allocation of customers or suppliers; or any other term or condition related to competition.

9. **Abide by the social network's rules.** By joining a particular social network, you agree to abide by that community's terms of use, so review those terms carefully.
10. **Avoid blatant marketing.** Blatant marketing or advertising by individuals is inconsistent with the purposes of general dialogue and information exchange. The CBA may use its own social media site to promote programs and services.

### **Using the CBA's Name and/or Logo**

CBA Entities may incorporate the CBA's name and/or logo into their social media identity with prior approval from the CBA.

To create consistency and community on the Web, the CBA has established standard logo templates, disclaimers, and naming conventions. The Entity must work with their assigned staff liaison from the CBA to coordinate the development of the social network graphic and other site requirements.

All Entities must provide direct links on any social media page back to the CBA's primary social media page.

### **Enforcing These Guidelines**

The CBA reserves the right to monitor these sites and will take appropriate action to enforce these guidelines.