



# Scouts NSW Guidelines

## Social Media

### Why use these guidelines?

One of the privileges of being a Leader in Scouting is having the opportunity to guide, encourage, motivate and empower young people to “Do Their Best” and “Be Prepared”. With this privilege comes great responsibility to be a good role model. A Leader’s words and actions are an example to other Members of the Movement as well as the wider community. Scouts NSW values social media as a powerful way of connecting and communicating with its Members and the community (although it is not recommended as the only channel of communication). The use of social media can have a large impact on the reputation of individuals and the Association as a whole. Scouts NSW is committed to supporting the responsible use of social media by all its Members and expects all of its Members to use these platforms responsibly and in accordance with Scouts NSW policies and Code of Conduct.

Social media changes regularly. The content of these guidelines is current as at the date of the last revision.

### What is Social Media?

Social media are web-based or mobile-based platforms that allow users to interact and communicate and to instantly publish and share content that is visible to large audiences. They include:

- social and professional networking platforms like Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn
- video and photo sharing websites like YouTube and Vimeo
- blogging sites like Twitter
- online encyclopaedias like Wikipedia
- communication platforms like Messenger, WhatsApp and Skype
- messaging tools like SMS (text messages) and MMS (multimedia messages).

### Scouts NSW Digital Guidelines

As well as reading these guidelines, Members should also familiarise themselves with Scouts Australia’s *Technology Code of Use* that more broadly covers use of technology within Scouts.

## **Who do these guidelines apply to?**

Members are expected to observe these guidelines whether they are using social media for personal use or for Scout-related use.

### **i. Personal Use**

Personal use refers to an individual's use of social media within a personal social network that is not officially connected to Scouts Australia NSW (e.g. a Facebook profile belonging to "Joe Bloggs", rather than "Akela of 1st Baulkham Hills Scout Troop").

### **ii. Scout-Related Use**

Scout-related use refers to the use of social media to represent the Association/Group/Section etc. in an official capacity (for example, the Facebook page or website for your Group etc.).

## **Expectations**

### **1. Observing the Guidelines of Individual Platforms**

Members are expected to be aware of and strictly follow the Terms of Service outlined by each social media platform (e.g. the guidelines for use of Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.)

### **2. Observing Legal Guidelines**

Adult Members should also be aware of the Australian laws governing the use of social media, including the issues of defamation, privacy, child protection, discrimination, bullying and harassment, copyright and intellectual property.

For example, making derogatory and untrue statements about an individual may constitute defamation, harassment or bullying. Using another individual's photos or other material may breach copyright laws. Making statements about Scouts NSW may breach Members' obligations regarding the protection of confidential information.

There are personal and legal consequences for individuals who breach these laws.

### **3. Observing Scouts NSW Guidelines**

When using social media, Members should remember the Association's high expectations of behaviour and not do anything on a social media platform that reflects poorly on them, on other individuals inside or outside Scouts, or on the Association as a whole. Members are expected to act responsibly, with common sense and good judgment when using social media.

Members are also expected to behave in accordance with the Association's policies, the *Scout Promise and Law* and the *Code of Conduct for Adults in Scouting* "at all times".

Therefore, whether they are "online" or "offline", Members should always:

- respect the dignity of themselves and others
- act with consideration and good judgement
- respect every individual's right to privacy
- demonstrate a high degree of individual responsibility and
- not use the Movement to promote their own beliefs, behaviours or practices.

Members must not engage in behaviour that raises a reasonable suspicion that they have engaged in, or will engage in, conduct that breaches any of the Association's policies, or the other high standards that apply to adult Members.

When communicating using social media, Members should make it clear that they are expressing their own personal views, thoughts, and opinions, rather than the official view of the Association.

Inappropriate use of social media includes:

- posting offensive, abusive, obscene, bullying, defamatory or derogatory material
- posting personal contact information of Members online
- disclosing confidential Scouts NSW information.

### **To think about...**

It's important for adult Members to keep in mind that:

- Online posts are usually public, and can be seen by the wider community. Once they are "out there" they often cannot be removed completely.
- Any information posted on a social networking platform may be taken out of context.
- Some good questions to ask may be: *How would I feel if my family, colleagues, or my boss saw this post? Would I be happy for this material to be published on the home page of a media site? Do I really know and trust all of my Facebook and Twitter "friends"?*
- Privacy cannot be guaranteed on social networking forums. Members should be responsible for understanding privacy settings and changes to other technologies related to social media.
- The content posted on social media platforms can live forever on the Internet. Therefore, when creating Scout-related websites or pages, Members should consider how to transfer administration rights and duties when the initial administrators end their direct involvement in Scouting.

## **Facebook Pages**

### **Scouts NSW official Facebook page**

Scouts NSW has an official Facebook page, and many Scout Groups and Regions also have a Facebook page. These platforms serve to promote and advertise the work of the Association, to report on recent and upcoming events and to share other important and encouraging news.

The Marketing and Communications Department at Scouts NSW State Service Centre facilitates the Association's Facebook page.

All Groups are encouraged to contact the Head of Marketing and Communications at [communications@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:communications@nsw.scouts.com.au) if they wish to contribute material to the Scouts NSW page.

The Department reserves the right to remove posts which are deemed to be unsuitable for publishing.

### **Facebook Pages for a Group or Section**

Creating and maintaining a Facebook page for your Group or Section is a big responsibility. Members should keep in mind the following:

- Facebook requires all users to be at least 13 years of age.
- Parents should be informed if Youth Members are being encouraged to connect with a Scouts Facebook page.
- The Facebook page should be a public profile (or "Fan Page"). Public profiles allow Facebook users to "Like" the page and become a fan, but they do not have a "friend" function like profile pages do.

- There should be at least two adult administrators who have access to the login, password, and facilitation of the account.
- The content of the page should be monitored regularly. Inappropriate posts should be removed quickly. Administrators of the page may be legally responsible for any harmful comments that are allowed to remain on the page.
- Only Scouts NSW email addresses should be used for any contact points
- Members should never give out personal information about Members to anyone on Facebook.

## Websites

### **Websites for a Group or Section**

Scout Group or Section websites affect the brand of Scouts.

Members should keep in mind the following:

- The content of the website must be appropriate to the Scouting movement.
- The personal information of Youth Members and adult Members should be protected. Personal details of Members should not be published.
- Members should be cautious of copyright infringement or plagiarism when creating a website for their Group or Section.
- Using a password protected area for sensitive information for parents

### **Two Deep Leadership when using social media and electronic communication**

Scouts NSW's Two Deep Leadership policy requires that Members avoid potentially compromising situations by ensuring, where reasonably practicable, that at least two adults are in attendance whilst supervising Youth Members. The reason for the existence of these guidelines is to protect our Youth Members and also to protect our adult Members from false allegations, claims of negligence and other liabilities, which may occur even if the adult Member's behaviour is innocent.

The expectation that adult Members always observe Two Deep Leadership extends to interactions with Youth Members electronically, both online and via telephone.

Adult Members should not engage in one-on-one discussions with young people online or via telephone, for example through emails or Facebook messaging, Whats App or Skype, texting or telephone conversations. This is the same as going into a private room with a young person and closing the door. All electronic communication between adult Members and Youth Members should be public.

If a circumstance does arise where an adult Member needs to communicate with a Youth Member electronically, the communication should always include at least one other adult Member or parent (for example, by "CCing" the other adult Member in an email, or including the other adult in a message thread).

### **Two Deep Leadership and "friending" Youth Members on Facebook**

Scouts NSW strongly recommends that adult Members not be Facebook friends with Youth Members. This recommendation is to keep our Youth Members safe as well as to protect our adult Members against any perceptions or claims of inappropriate behaviour, which can have a damaging effect on an individual both personally and professionally.

Adult Members should keep in mind that there are difficulties and risks associated with being friends with Youth Members online.

Being Facebook friends with a Youth Member allows them access to the content you post on your wall, as well as the content that your friends may post on your wall. If there is material on your Facebook page that is not appropriate for a Youth Member to view, you are leaving yourself open to criticism. You may be inadvertently breaching your commitment to being a good role model to Youth Members at all times.

The media is rife with stories of adults in positions of responsibility (school teachers, Scout Leaders, etc.) using social media platforms to abuse their power and commit crimes against young people, like posting threatening comments or engaging in “grooming” behaviour. Members should be mindful of community perceptions and use caution.

### **Media enquiries through social media platforms**

Members who are approached by the media through a social media platform about Scouting should refer the journalist to the Head of Marketing and Communications on (02) 9735 9000 or [communications@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:communications@nsw.scouts.com.au)

### **Cyber bullying**

Scouts Australia NSW is passionate about creating a respectful and inclusive environment, about supporting our Members and keeping them safe, both online and offline.

Cyber bullying is any kind of bullying or harassment carried out using technology.

Cyber bullying may include:

- sharing embarrassing photos of a person online
- sending a person harassing calls, texts or emails
- posting derogatory or humiliating comments about a person online
- setting up fake profiles pretending to be another person.

The Association does not tolerate any Member being bullied, harassed or discriminated against.

### **Child Protection Concerns**

All child protection concerns should follow Scouts' Know it, Live it, Log it Protocols and be reported. More information is available here: <https://www.nsw.scouts.com.au/youthprotection/>

### **Breaches of these guidelines**

Scouts NSW is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its Members. Any suspicions/allegations that a Member is not abiding by these guidelines should be reported to the Scout Leader/Member who is next-in-charge.

Breach of these guidelines will result in the Association taking disciplinary action.

### **Where can I find out more?**

If you have more questions please contact the Head of Marketing and Communications at [communications@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:communications@nsw.scouts.com.au)