



Providence Methodist Church (Jamaica) Social Media Policy

(Created 04.10.19, version 1.0)

Introduction

This social media policy presents and explains the rules governing social media use at the Providence Methodist Church Jamaica (PMCJa), which falls under the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas (MCCA).

It follows that this policy describes how designated staff/social media team members must use the PMCJa's social media accounts. It also explains the rules surrounding what employees/team members may say about PMCJa and church-related issues on their personal accounts.

Why This Policy Exists

The aim of social media use for PMCJa is to aid in the mission of the MCCA, "***To spread scriptural holiness through the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith***". Social media presents a relatively new, unique and integral way of interacting with people and sharing the love and gospel of Christ with our congregation, Jamaica and the entire world. This social media policy exists to ensure employees/team members, regardless of their positions within PMCJa, use their social accounts in safe and effective fashions.

Although social media will be of benefit to the PMCJa, as laid out above, poorly-judged or -timed activity can hurt the PMCJa's and MCCA's reputation, cause unnecessary security and legal issues and hinder our mission to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ .

Policy Scope

PMCJa's social media policy pertains to all PMCJa staff members who log onto social media platforms during work hours, as well as team members/volunteers who post to social media platforms on behalf of PMCJa.

Therefore, it also applies to social media activity that relies on PMCJa Internet and occurs on church premises.

For the purposes of this policy, social media may refer to:

- Popular social networks such as Twitter and Facebook
- Popular messaging platforms such as WhatsApp
- Photo-sharing websites such as Pinterest and Instagram



- Professional social networks such as LinkedIn
- Discussion forums such as the ones found on 4chan and Reddit
- Question and answer-based networks such as Quora and Yahoo Answers
- Review systems such as Yelp and Google Reviews

Basic Advice and General Guidelines

Whether PMCJa employees/team members are posting from PMCJa or personal accounts, we encourage them to follow basic best practice rules.

Adhere to these standards to avoid common social media mistakes:

- **Understand the social network.** Different social media platforms have different purposes. For example, it's common to see more personal status updates on Facebook than LinkedIn. Before posting, become familiar with the network by reading FAQs and quickly researching what is and is not acceptable.
- **Correct your own mistakes.** When you make a factual error in a post, create an update to correct it. Deleting or editing the original post should come at your own discretion, depending on the situation.
- **Beware potential security threats.** Hackers can use social networks to distribute spam and malware. They can also launch phishing attempts. You should report suspicious activity, including questionable comments and friend requests.
- **Be careful when sharing information about yourself or others.** Hackers can also use personal information to their advantage.
- **Don't escalate issues.** Responding to other social media users, especially concerning a contentious subject, can result in a heated argument. To avoid such arguments, it may be best to avoid commenting if you feel you may spark conflict.
- **Think before posting.** This is the golden social media rule. Not only should you check grammar and spelling, but ensure there won't be any negative effects of posting a status update. These include creating arguments and divulging sensitive information.



Use of PMCJa Social Accounts

PMCJa social media accounts must only be used and created by authorized individuals for the purpose of meeting defined church goals.

Goals and Purposes of PMCJa Social Media Accounts

As the social media landscape quickly changes and evolves, we encourage team members to think about new ways to use PMCJa social media accounts.

However, account activity should not stray from the church's goals of sharing the love and gospel of Christ.

Approved Users

Only approved users may access PMCJa social media accounts to perform the aforementioned tasks.

The PMCJa Superintendent minister OR social media team leader will grant authorization. He or she will do so when a team member's role involves creating and executing social media strategies, or researching new and existing target audiences.

The PMCJa only approves certain team members to ensure its social media voice and approach stay consistent, aligning with the church's aims and objectives.

Creating Social Media Accounts Under the Company's Name

As the PMCJa must explore the advantages and disadvantages of expanding its social media presence into new networks, the Superintendent minister OR social media team leader must approve the creation of PMCJa social media accounts.

If team members see the opportunity to create a social media account that supports church goals, they should pitch their ideas to the Superintendent minister OR social media team leader.

Use of Personal Social Media Accounts at Work

As personal social media use can yield clear professional benefits, such as expanding industry knowledge and connections, PMCJa understands it is advantageous for employees to use personal accounts.

Below are acceptable uses for accessing personal social media accounts during work hours:



- Church-related research
- Monitoring church accounts
- Connecting and interacting with users who may benefit professional development
- Emergency purposes, such as contacting friends and family members who cannot be reached otherwise

Below are unacceptable uses for accessing personal social media accounts during work hours:

- Browsing friend photos and accounts
- Adding contacts to your networks for non-professional reasons
- Participating in conversations not pertaining to work-related topics
- Browsing, commenting on or otherwise participating in pornographic, illicit or any other unsavoury materials

Note that during breaks and lunches, employees may use their personal social media accounts freely.

However, activity should not conflict with the following section.

Inappropriate Uses

Regardless of whether the social media account is personal or under company name, employees should not:

- Conduct illegal or criminal activities, as defined by local law
- Distribute material that could be interpreted as libelous or defamatory
- Share updates, images and messages that may tarnish the church's public image
- Discuss colleagues, church members and suppliers without their expressed consent
- Harass others by sending them offensive content and messages
- Distribute spam and chain messages



Policy Enforcement

Employees who violate this social media policy could face disciplinary action. Depending on the nature and severity of the violation, this could include termination of employment. Team members who violate this policy may be removed from the team and may have to face the church's disciplinary body.

PMCJa reserves the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through the church's Internet resources. These include, but are not limited to, computers and mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones that are provided for church business use.

Moreover, the PMCJa maintains official records that contain certain data related to social media activity. These include, but are not limited to, messages sent and received through the company's computer systems.

When appropriate, PMCJa may involve law enforcement officials and agencies. In doing so, the company may be compelled to share stored data.