PAN Social Media Policy

Definition

These guidelines govern the publication of and commentary on social media by employees, contractors, volunteers, and board members of the Pacific AIDS Network and its related projects and programs ("PAN"). It is expected that PAN employees, volunteers, and board members will adhere to these guidelines. If you have any questions about the guidelines and their application, please get in touch with Janet Madsen, PAN's Capacity Building and Digital Communications Coordinator, (janet@paninbc.ca).

For the purposes of these guidelines, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo and the blog function of PAN's website. These guidelines are in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

Social media profiles and activity referring to relationship with PAN and/or PAN's work

PAN believes that our employees, contractors, volunteers, and board members are our best ambassadors and promoters. Through their external relationships, employees have the potential to add value to the work of our organization and to enhance our image.

Before engaging in work-related social media, employees and volunteers, including the Board of Directors, must obtain the permission of the Executive Director. Employees and volunteers who have received this permission are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with these guidelines. PAN employees are subject to these guidelines to the extent they identify themselves as a PAN employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to PAN).

Notwithstanding the previous section, these guidelines apply to all uses of social media, including personal, by PAN employees and board members (and in certain cases, volunteers) who are using social media in their personal lives, as their position with PAN would be well known within the community.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that PAN employees, volunteers and board members must otherwise follow.

Vetting

Wherever possible, and particularly when generating content on issues that are more "controversial", that is stating a PAN (as opposed to personal) position, it is essential to vet that content by a 2nd set of eyes. Ideally, content should be vetted by the Executive Director or one of the Directors, and or PAN's Capacity Building and Digital Communications Coordinator, prior to publication.

Social media profiles and activity representing PAN

PAN is active on Twitter and manages our account (PANinBC) in house. This feed shares information on PAN's programs, advocacy, and resources. We also share information from partner groups and other information that will build capacity of our members and help us meet our mission and strategic goals. Should we identify a need for other social media profiles, we may manage them in house or select someone to do so for us.

Before acting as the representative voice of PAN and setting up a social media profile as such, anyone with a staff, volunteer, or other associated relationship with PAN must get approval to set up social media identities, logon ID's and usernames. This request may be made to the Executive Director. You may not use PAN's name, logo, or other communications material without prior approval from the Executive Director. Copies of all login and password information must be stored with PAN's Executive Director and the Capacity Building and Digital Communications Coordinator.

Should a social media account be approved and managed outside of PAN, program or project profiles on social media sites must be consistent with profiles on the PAN website or other PAN publications. Official PAN and PAN project logos must be used for your profile photograph. PAN logos can be obtained from the Capacity Building and Digital Communications Coordinator.

Assistance in setting up social media accounts and their settings can be obtained from PAN's Capacity Building and Digital Communications Coordinator.

Principles for posting information

Don't tell secrets

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialogue with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our current projects, future projects, names of individuals involved in projects, financial information, research, and trade secrets, as well as policy or official positions on issues that have not yet been ratified by the Board of Directors. We must respect the wishes of our member organizations, partners and collaborators, regarding the confidentiality of current projects. We must also be mindful of the importance of confidentiality in our sector.

Protect your own privacy

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the PAN website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

Be honest

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for PAN. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, exaggerated or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also, be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

Respect copyright laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including PAN's own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

Respect your audience, PAN, and your coworkers

The public in general, and PAN's employees, member organizations and partners, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with the PAN website. Don't be afraid to be yourself but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of PAN.

Controversial Issues

If you see misrepresentations made about PAN in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Don't try to settle scores or goad competitors or others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

Be the first to respond to your own mistakes

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so: add "Updated on ---- " with date inserted. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

Disclaimers

Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for, but that they're not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer saying that while you work for PAN, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of PAN.

Complying with job responsibilities

PAN social media contributors on staff are to publish or comment via social media during work hours and using work facilities. However, they must make sure that blogging/tweeting/posting does not interfere with their other job description deliverables.

General Social Media Tips

The following tips are not mandatory but will contribute to successful use of social media.

- The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.
- Quality matters and is a reflection on PAN. **Use a spell-checker**. When posting a blog to the PAN website, it is always best practice to ask someone for feedback on how to improve it.
- Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you are "re-tweeting" or "sharing" content from another social media contributor, always be sure to follow the links and verify that the content is acceptable.
- The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, and as noted above ("Vetting"), whenever possible ask someone else to look at it first.

Acceptable Content to Share

Information shared through social media (website and applications) should reflect our foundation of strategic directions, values and approaches to work, with the goal of defining PAN by our mission:

We lead an inspired, strong, and effective community-based response to HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, and related communicable diseases and conditions.

Information should contribute to and/or enhance our programs, services, and resources. Work priorities determined through strategic planning, departmental and program planning, analysis of

Member and Stakeholder Surveys, conferences, events, and other evaluation tools will provide direction for information to document (blogs, reports, presentations) and broadcast (website; social media channels).

For Twitter (and other social media channels, should we add them), share PAN site material first and foremost, but not to the detriment of building and supporting relationships with key partner organizations and stakeholders.

Sources: Resources external to PAN must come from reputable sources. This could include member organizations; organizations with which we have working relationships; government and/or government-based information sites; recognized research and/or healthcare delivery organizations; educational institutions; reputable social justice organizations, etc. If in doubt, check with PAN's Capacity Building and Digital Communications Coordinator.

Enforcement

Guideline violations will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.