**Important Note! Please read first!**

Medical Marketing Whiz is a medical marketing agency. We are NOT attorneys and do not represent this as legal advice. Medical Marketing Whiz does not provide legal advice and, as such, the template below is only offered as a suggestion. Additional compliance rules vary greatly from state to state, country to country. If you feel like you need legal consultation in addition to the opinions we’ve provided, be sure to consult your own attorney.

Please select and copy the text below, then paste it into your own new document. Then carefully read through the text, add your personalized practice name, doctor name(s), etc., before printing and distributing to your team. Be sure to take some time in one of your team meetings to read through the policy with your team members!

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**Our Practice’s Social Media Policy**

The following applies to <your practice name> employees who create or contribute to social media, including but not limited to: blogs, social networks, online videos, pinboards, forums, etc.

As social media changes the way we communicate and conduct business, it is important to remember what you do online is ultimately linked to your personal life, your professional life, and our dental practice.

Here are our practice guidelines. They are broken into two sections, A and B:

1. **Your “Personal” Social Media Participation**

**A1.** <your practice name> respects an employee’s right to participate in social media for personal reasons during non-work hours. All <your practice name> employees participating in social media and online commentary—even on their own personal accounts—are expected to use their professional judgment prior to posting anything online that is connected in any way to our dental practice or to our patients, and to adhere to all office confidentiality policies currently in place. Content posted on any blogs, social networks, online videos, pinboards, forums, etc. that is connected in any way to our practice or to our patients should comply with our organization’s confidentiality and employee ethics policies. Any work-related comments should also be respectful and relevant in a way that protects the practice’s brand and reputation and follows both the spirit and letter of the law.

**A2.** Even though you maintain and use your own personal social media accounts, your online presence reflects upon <your practice name> and its reputation. Be aware that your actions captured via images, posts or comments can be considered by some as a reflection on our practice, regardless of whether or not it occurs during work hours. If you make comments about work, or work-related topics, please post meaningful, respectful comments that positively promote your role as a <your practice name> employee and reflect positively on your co-workers and team members.

**A3.** Respect the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy requirements. If you are unsure of what they are, let us know so that you can be better trained.

1. **Your “Practice” Social Media Participation**

**B1.** Always be kind, honest, generous, and genuine.

**B2.**Respect copyright laws and reference or cite sources appropriately. If you have a question about the appropriateness or legality of an image, always error on the safe side by asking first.

**B3.**If you disagree with another’s opinion, do not respond until you have visited with our practice manager or with <dr.’s name>. In every case, keep comments appropriate, respectful and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it’s becoming antagonistic, politely disengage from the dialogue—then talk with our practice manager or with <dr.’s name> before continuing the conversation.

**B4.**Never participate in social media when the topic being discussed might be considered a “crisis” situation—or, if somebody is belligerent. If you have a question, talk to our practice manager or with <dr.’s name>.

**B5.**If you are ever in doubt about posting a comment or image, don’t! Protect our practice and its reputation, and our patients’ privacy. Consider all content carefully. If you have a question, talk to our practice manager or with <dr.’s name>.

**B6.**Before posting anyone’s photo anywhere, ask for their permission, and be sure to have them sign our consent form—then properly file said form. If the person is a minor, their parent or guardian must sign the consent form.

**B7.**Remember that nearly every social media interaction falls into one of the three following categories. Here are our “Rules of Engagement” for each category:

* **Category 1: Exchanges Started by Another Party** - Example: Sally Smith “LIkes” our Facebook page. After Sally’s visit, she posts the following comment on our wall, “Thanks, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and team, for taking such good care of me today!” Rule of Engagement: Respond directly, sincerely and openly. However, there is no need to divulge any additional information beyond what the patient has shared. DO NOT write something like, “Thanks for your comment, Sally. Good thing we caught that awful disease you have before it became a bigger problem!”
* **Category 2: Exchanges Started by You** - Example: You post to our Facebook wall, “It was wonderful seeing one of our favorite patients today, Sally Smith!” Rule of Engagement: Kindly ask Sally’s permission first, before she leaves our practice. Ask if it would be OK to thank her publicly on our Facebook page.
* **Category 3: Exchanges Started by You That Include an Image or Video** - Example: You post to our Facebook wall, “It was wonderful seeing one of our favorite patients today, Sally Smith!”, AND you upload a testimonial video, or a photograph of her smiling and holding a Social Sign, to our Facebook page. Rule of Engagement: Kindly ask Sally’s permission before she leaves our practice—AND have her sign a consent form.

**Thank you for being our valued team member and for the important role you play in strengthening relationships with our patients!**