

Social Media Policy

Social Media tools were designed for individuals to use, but increasingly organizations are using them successfully to promote their missions including the USCCB, TCC, Priests for Life, and the CPLC. The spirit of this policy is to (1) encourage vigilance and awareness of our roles as representatives of the CPLC whether in person, on paper or online and (2) create a process by which the proper channels can be informed of CPLC's online activities, while maintaining the fluidity of communication integral to an organization's effective presence in social media.

1. **Definition:** Social media is the creation and exchange of user-generated content via web-based technologies such as Internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, microblogging, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, rating and social networking. This Social Media policy applies to all such social media, including but not limited to, the use of Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Blogger and other social media platforms.

2. **Personal Media Account:** CPLC employees may maintain and use social media accounts for their personal use when they are not engaged in work on behalf of the CPLC ("personal media account").
 - a. Any such personal media accounts should not make any reference to the CPLC. This includes, but is not limited to, any biographical or informational mention of a person's current or prior employment or association with the CPLC, any ministry of the CPLC or any events sponsored by the CPLC (with the exception of accepting an "invitation" to an event created by a CPLC media account).
 - b. Although your personal media account should not explicitly mention the CPLC, the community is often aware of our association with the CPLC. As such, please be mindful that your statements and conduct when engaging in social media may indirectly reflect on the CPLC and the Diocese of Dallas, and thus, "should be marked by Christian charity and respect for truth." *See USCCB Social Media Guidelines*

3. **Professional Media Account:**
 - a. "Professional Media Accounts" Are Not Permitted for Personal Use
 - i. No employees or other persons associated with the CPLC should independently establish a professional profile, page, group or other account in any type of social media which indicates, in any manner, his or her position or association with the CPLC ("professional media account"). For example, no one should have a professional Facebook profile (i.e., Becky Visosky, Executive Director of CPLC).
 - ii. In the event you have already established a professional media account, please immediately delete the profile or account or rename it without denoting any affiliation with the CPLC. If you would like to post a comment upon the closure of your professional media account, you may post something similar to the following:

I am closing this account. If you would like to continue to communicate with me personally, you may connect with me at [insert personal contact

information]. If you would like further information concerning the CPLC, please visit The Catholic Pro-Life Community on Facebook, CPLC Dallas on Twitter or at www.prolifedallas.org.

- b. “Professional Media Accounts” May Be Used *with CPLC’s Consent* under the Following Parameters:
 - i. Should a CPLC Director or Coordinator wish to create a professional media account to promote or in association with a specific CPLC ministry, he or she should obtain the prior written consent of his or her supervisor (email will suffice).
 - ii. If you have already established a professional media account on behalf of a particular ministry, please immediately contact your supervisor to discuss whether and how the continuation of this account will further the goals of the ministry and the mission of the CPLC.
 - iii. CPLC Administrative Team Members (the Executive Director and Directors of Communications, Development, and Multicultural) each have a LinkedIn professional media account established and maintained by the Communications Department. These accounts are intended for professional purposes only and will not be used for personal comments or posting.
4. **Creation of Professional Media Account:**
- a. If a supervisor receives a request from an employee to create or maintain a professional media account, he or she should contact the CPLC Director of Communications to discuss that request before approving or denying the request.
 - b. Upon receiving the written approval of your supervisor to create or continue a professional media account, please email communications@prolifedallas.org regarding the account, including the web address of such account and a copy of the supervisor’s approval (email approval will suffice).
 - c. The Communications Department will then assist you in the creation, editing and continued maintenance of the professional media account.
 - d. **Please note:** all professional media accounts must include and/or grant permission (including any applicable passwords) to CPLC Director of Communications (and any other person he or she may indicate) as a co-administrator of said account. Such accounts must be set up in a manner that allows the addition and deletion of administrators without adversely affecting the account.
5. **Maintenance of Professional Media Account:** In the event you are maintaining a professional media account on behalf of and with the consent of the CPLC, please abide by the following:
- a. This account may be used only for the purposes of furthering the goals of the applicable ministry in line with the overall mission of the CPLC. Please be mindful that you are representing the CPLC to the community, and that while professional media accounts can be an effective tool of education and promotion, they are not intended to be a forum to voice personal opinions.
 - b. All media accounts should be viewed and/or updated at least weekly.

- c. When updating a media account, view the most recent postings to ensure they are relevant and content appropriate. If the content is in anyway offensive or is wholly off-topic, then remove the content. If there are repeat-offenders posting to the site, notify all other site-administrators, including the Communications Director.
- d. Do not post any politically partisan content. If any other person posts politically partisan content, please remove it immediately. The CPLC, as a ministry of the Diocese of Dallas, is a non-partisan organization and thus cannot sponsor any particular political candidate or party.
- e. If you have any questions concerning how to maintain or operate a professional media account, please consult the Communications Department.

6. Deletion of Professional Media Account

- a. No CPLC-approved professional media account should be deleted or discontinued without the consent of the Executive Director or the Director of Communications.
- b. In the event you want to discontinue your association with a professional media account on behalf of the CPLC or a CPLC ministry, please notify the Director of Communications to coordinate the appropriate actions to remove your affiliation while maintaining the integrity of the account to the extent possible.
- c. In the event your association or employment with the CPLC is terminated, voluntarily or involuntarily, you must relinquish all administrative control of any professional media accounts and provide all applicable passwords to the Executive Director or the Director of Communications before your last date of employment with the CPLC.

7. Communicating with Minors: CPLC personnel should always be considerate of boundaries and ensure they are observed, particularly in communications with young people and with use of social media.

- a. Private channels and private communication create an environment that puts both children and adults at risk. To help ensure that all communication on social media channels remains positive and safe, channels used by CPLC personnel to communicate with children regarding ministry activities must be public and all communication on or through them must be public. This enables administrators to monitor all communication and helps ensure there is no inappropriate communication between adults and children or between children themselves.
- b. Official ministry social media accounts should not be used to contact children privately (e.g., Facebook Messenger, Twitter Direct Message). Online “chatting” with children is not permitted (Google Hangouts, etc.)
- c. CPLC personnel must not initiate or accept “friend” requests with children connected to ministry related activities using their personal profiles on Facebook or other social media platforms or apps.

- d. If a child directly contacts CPLC personnel engaged in ministry through a personal social media account, the ministry account should be used to reply. In unusual cases where a personal account is used to respond, such as an emergency situation which requires urgent communication, CPLC personnel should maintain copies of all such messages and *must* promptly provide copies of the communication to Safe Environment Director and Supervisor.
- e. CPLC personnel are forbidden to post or distribute personal identifiable information of any child under the age of eighteen. Personal identifiable information includes but is not limited to: full name, home address, email address, telephone number or any information that would allow someone to identify or contact a child or that would jeopardize their safety or well-being in any way.
- f. As an exception to this policy, a child whose parent or other legally responsible adult has signed a current Video/Image Release form may be identified by name in photographs or videos posted to an official social media account unless the child or his/her parent has requested otherwise
- g. When sharing photographs or videos of children, verifiable consent should always be obtained from the parent or guardian before images are shared online. Verifiable consent can take the form of: A Video/Image Release form, an email from a parent or guardian, or spoken permission by a parent or guardian in the presence of another adult, preferably an employee of the CPLC.
- h. Counseling of children through social media is not permitted.
- i. Electronic communication is not intended to be the primary means of communicating with minors. In extraordinary circumstances when using email, text messages or other electronic communication with a minor, a second safe environment cleared adult must be included. Except in emergency situations, this communication can only take place between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Employees must read and abide by the Social Media Policy. As with other Safe Environment policies, violations of this policy may be considered in performance evaluations and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination and/or permanent suspension from service within the Catholic Pro-Life Community.

The Catholic Pro-Life Community reserves the right to suspend, modify, or withdraw this policy at any time at its sole discretion and without notice.