



## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to promote a consistent approach by the Christian Reformed Church Toowoomba (CRCT) to the effective, responsible, and safe use of social media so that it bears positive witness to Christ, promotes the mission and ministry of CRCT, and does not harm any person or the church.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers who administer a CRCT or affiliated program's social media account.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. require that social media is used in a way that serves the mission and ministry of the church;
2. protect people and the church from hurt or harm that might be caused by uninformed, irresponsible, or careless use of social media; and
3. establish a culture and practice that does not tolerate unacceptable use of social media in any circumstances.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Social media can be considered a useful tool for ministry and building up the body of Christ. However if used in an uninformed, irresponsible, or careless manner, this tool can create risks for the church and even be dangerous. Employees and volunteers are expected to use social media in a way that avoids harming other people and protects the church against loss, liability, litigation, adverse publicity, and reputational damage.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Social media:** any online website or application that allows users to create and share content and participate in social networking. Examples include (but are not limited to) Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, Google+, Snapchat and blogs.

**Social media use or social media presence:** includes establishing an account, page or group, posting new content, responding to existing content, sharing a post with others, linking to or from other sites or pages, and 'following' an organisation to stay informed of new content they post.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The effective application of this policy will:

1. Require that social media is used in a way that serves the mission and ministry of the church, by:
  - a. promoting a positive social media presence in line with our church's mission to glorify God, grow in faith, share our hope, and serve in love.
  - b. expecting all employees and volunteers who use social media in their work, to set a good example in the way they use it.
2. Protect people and the church from hurt or harm that might be caused by uninformed, irresponsible, or careless use of social media, by:
  - a. appointing people who will administer and be accountable for work-related social media, and clearly articulate responsibilities
  - b. applying additional safeguards and monitoring if children or young people are involved in a social media presence in combination with the church's ChildSafe program
  - c. ensuring all members involved in children's ministry read and comply with ChildSafe module SM1 – Managing Safety in Social Media.
  - d. communicating this Social Media Policy to all church members.

3. Establish a culture and practice that does not tolerate unacceptable use of social media under any circumstances, by communicating to all users what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, which includes but is not limited to:
- any type of criminal or illegal activity
  - vilification, discrimination, defamation, bullying, stalking, harassment, intimidation, or any action that a reasonable person would expect to cause hurt or harm to another person
  - publishing material which is pornographic or obscene, violent, racist or hate related
  - exposing the CRCT to loss, liability, litigation, adverse publicity, or reputational damage
  - publishing sensitive, confidential, or inappropriate information
  - publishing photos and images of people or minors (as per their parent/guardian) who have expressly advised they do not wish for their image to be used in any way
  - breaching copyright legislation or other intellectual property rights
  - impersonating or misrepresenting another person
  - establishing or administering a social media presence that uses the CRCT name or logo or implicitly or explicitly identifies with the CRCT without permission from the CRCT
  - employees, volunteers, or members conducting or promoting their own private venture or business on a CRCT social media presence
  - acting in any way that calls into question the individual's suitability for, or their capacity to serve, in their role in the CRCT.

### RESPONSIBLE PERSONS

The CRCT Session is responsible for implementing this policy across the church and its associated ministries as well as being responsible for acting on reports of unacceptable use of social media by employees or volunteers.

### REFERENCES or RELATED POLICIES

- CRCT Privacy Policy
- ChildSafe resources (Module SM1)
- Qld Legislation - *Information Privacy Act 2009*

#### DOCUMENT CONTROLS

Policy Authority:	Session
Distribution:	Session, CRCT website
Version:	1.1
Revision History:	
Next Review Date:	January 2025
(bi-annually)	