

Social Media Policy



Introduction: The Cottages recognizes the importance of the Internet in shaping public thinking about our company and our current and potential employees, partners, and customers. The Cottages also recognizes the importance of our employees joining in and helping shape industry conversation and direction. Therefore, The Cottages is committed to supporting your right to interact knowledgeably and responsibly on the Internet through blogging and interaction in social media. Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, etc., and many other online networking communities are the fastest growing form of communication between people and business. Social Media provides a great way for staff, volunteers, residents and their families to share information and advocate for The Cottages.

Purpose: While other social media applications may be used in the future, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are now serving as our first phase in developing an official social media presence for The Cottages and our assisted living communities. This will help augment our current marketing efforts and leverage our online presence and get the most out of our efforts. All of this is to help us with a certain purpose in mind---to educate and inform the public of the superior services and assisted living care provided at all the communities with The Cottages.

Guidelines: Recognizing that the use of online blogs and other social platforms is popular with our staff and our potential customers, The Cottages has a Social Media Policy as outlined herein to help guide the staff in appropriate communication on the internet. The guidelines will help you open up a respectful and knowledgeable interaction with people on the Internet. They also protect the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of The Cottages and our current services, employees, partners, customers, and competitors.

As an employee or associate of The Cottages **you may do the following:**

- Mention on your blog or website that you are an employee of The Cottages.
- Share with others the nature of what you do. IE. Provide personal care for the elderly.
- Talk about exciting activities and/or events that are coming up.
- Mention the positive aspects of your job that you like.
- Speak respectfully about the company in general in a positive, uplifting manner.
- Drive traffic to our website or encourage others to visit one of our locations.

You may not:

- Speak on behalf of the company, nor represent that you do so, unless you have permission from the owners.
- Share information that is confidential and proprietary in nature about the company.
- Speak about particular residents by name or about the residents in general in a negative way. Do not disclose a resident's identity or health condition in any way.
- Speak about your manager/supervisor in a negative or demeaning way.

Social Media Policy

- Speak about fellow employees or associates in a negative or demeaning way.
- Speak about the company in any manner that is negative or casts a bad light.
- Post pictures or likenesses of residents or other employees.
- Share your feelings in specific or general about your job if they are negative or contrary.
- Use The Cottages logo or trademarks without explicit permission from the owners.
- Share anything at all that is inflammatory, offensive, or derogatory in nature.
- Take photos of residents or facility on your personal cell phone

Conclusion: Please remember that this policy is intended to help you blog responsibly. Those that do not will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which may include termination. You must recognize that you are legally liable for anything you write or present online. Employees will be disciplined by The Cottages for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment. You can also be sued by the company, employees, competitors, and any individual or company that views your commentary, content, or images as such stated above.

The Internet is your permanent record. Everything you post on the Internet is cached by Google forever, and otherwise copied to innumerable other places out of your control. **The Internet is a pen, not a pencil.**

There will likely be events or issues that are not addressed in these Guidelines. Therefore, the responsibility lies with each individual to use good judgment. So when in doubt, **don't post it!**

