

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

(Governing the use of e-mail, Internet and Social Networking Tools)

SSS, REALTORS[®] (Company) policy is that Company owned computers and Company provided access to e-mail and the Internet are to be used principally for business purposes. **(Personal use of agents'/employees' own equipment and access secured on your own are covered by this policy when used for business purposes. When using your personal equipment and access secured on your own remember that you are always licensed and thus subject to regulation whenever you are discussing your business, even when using personal e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools.)** The Company recognizes that limited personal use of e-mail, the Internet, and social networking tools (such as Facebook[®], Twitter[®], Linked In[®], You Tube or "blogging") can be a benefit to agents, employees and other authorized users.

The use of technology in our business is changing at a very rapid pace. Therefore, this policy will not only provide guidance with regard to the use of the Internet, e-mail and social networking tools in the businesses of agents/employees of the Company but also general principles to be followed in using future technologies and communication. Note that this policy applies when agents/employees are using e-mail, the Internet, and social networking in an effort to advance their real estate brokerage business while using Company, personal or a third party's equipment. The Company directs its agents/employees to follow the basic limits listed below; along with more specific requirements outlined in this chapter of the Policy Manual.

General Requirements

1. Agents/employees must take care to protect their client's confidential information at all times. This includes in the agent/employee's use of the Internet, certain e-mail messages and social networking tools.
2. Agents/employees must be courteous and professional at all times, especially when representing the Company. This includes the agents/employees' use of the Internet, e-mail and social networking tools. Agents/employees shall not make defamatory or derogatory remarks about others in their electronic communications. They will not engage in gossip, rumor-spreading, "cyber-bullying" or any similar behavior.
3. Agents/employees must take care to be truthful when advertising or making other representations. This includes those statements made or advertising placed through use of e-mail, the Internet, your personal Website or social networking tools.
4. Agents/employees are encouraged to seek the advice of their managing broker or the Office Internet Consultant (identified on p. _____) if they have questions or concerns regarding the use of the Internet, e-mail or social networking tools before publishing any information that could be questionable.

Use of the Internet, e-mail or social networking tools while at the office of the Company or on Company equipment.

Use of e-mail, the Internet and social networking tools by agents and employees is subject to the following guidelines:

1. Agents/employees may use e-mail, the Internet and social networking tools in connection with conducting their business on behalf of the Company.
2. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools for personal use except during break times, lunch time, and before and after normal working hours so as not to interfere with agents'/employees' duties for the Company.
3. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools for non-work related private business.
4. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to participate in football, basketball or other sports pools or leagues, or to gamble.
5. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to conduct political activities (unless expressly authorized to do so as part of agent's/employee's duties to the Company).
6. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to visit any pornographic sites.
7. Agents/employees should not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to discuss the business policies or practices of the Company with any person outside the Company without first clearing that with your managing broker.
Agents/employees may discuss policies/practices of the Company with a client or prospective client, but only through "private" e-mail and not through the use of social networking tools.
8. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to transmit any defamatory, offensive, harassing, disruptive, or derogatory statements or images; or statements or images that offend on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity or national origin, sexual orientation, political beliefs or disabilities.
9. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to distribute chain letters, search for alternative employment, transmit jokes, or participate in Internet discussion groups (unless such discussion groups relate directly to agent's/employee's job).

10. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools in any manner that may impair the Company's reputation or public standing, or that is prohibited by law or otherwise illegal.
11. Agents/employees may not use e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to upload, download or transmit, without the Company's managing broker's permission, copyrighted, trademarked or patented materials, trade secrets, or confidential, proprietary or private information or materials, except to the extent that they are used by an agent/employee in connection with a transaction.
12. Agents/employees should not use e-mail or social networking tools in any manner that would advocate that the Company adopt or that would indicate that the Company has a position or policy in place that is anticompetitive or which would otherwise violate state or federal antitrust laws.

The Company reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read and (for legitimate business purposes) disclose all communications by or to agent/employee with or without notice to agent or employee. Accordingly, agents/employees have no right to or expectation of privacy in the use of e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools on equipment owned by the Company. The Company has no obligation to ensure against authorized access to your e-mail or Internet use.

Advertising

1. When agents/employees are advertising properties using e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools they shall abide by all provisions contained in the Illinois License Law, its rules, and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics. Examples are including the Company name and information that makes the message truthful and complete in all advertising.
2. Agents/employees will comply with Federal CAN-SPAM requirements when using e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools to transmit electronic commercial messages. (See p._____ of this manual for CAN-SPAM policy).
3. Agents/employees will not use deceptive key words, meta tags or other devices to deceptively drive traffic to an Internet site.
4. Agents/employees will make sure that all advertising information given via e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools is current and accurate. Information should be checked at least every ____ days for accuracy and freshness.
5. Agents/employees will comply with all Fair Housing laws or regulations (federal, state, local and ethical) when using e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools in their businesses. (See p._____ of this manual for fair housing policy).
6. Agents/employees will discuss with client(s) the advertising/marketing to be done on their behalf including the use of e-mails, the Internet and social networking

tools to market properties. Agents/employees must note if there is any objection to marketing via use of these methods and if so, avoid such marketing methods.

Collection of Information

1. Agents/employees may not collect consumer information through the use of e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools unless the agent/employee:
 - Tells the consumer they are doing so;
 - Tells the consumer what they will be doing with the information gathered; and,
 - Tells the consumer how they are protecting the information.

E-mailing

1. Agents/employees are required to follow the provisions set forth in Section 1450.145 in the Administrative Rules under the Illinois Real Estate License Act of 2000 as from time to time amended.
2. Agents/employees are also required to follow the provisions set forth in the federal CAN-SPAM Act as from time to time amended.
3. Agents/employees should make sure they double-check any text they are sending or posting via e-mail and to whom it is being sent before they hit the “send” button.
4. Agents/employees are required to print those e-mails that deal with specifics of a transaction or authorization to perform a service or task and to place those printed copies in the appropriate transaction files.

Blogging

1. Agents/employees may participate in “blogging” in relation to their business as a real estate licensee so long as they follow all the policies and procedures set forth in this manual with regard to the use of e-mail, the Internet and social networking tools.
2. If agents/employees wish to establish a blog, they should contact their managing broker or the Office Internet Consultant identified on p. ____ of this manual. When establishing a blog, agents/employees should work with the Office Internet Consultant on posting “terms and conditions” that will apply to the blog.

Copyright and Protected Information

1. Agents/employees shall not copy, frame or otherwise use information received or viewed through e-mail, the Internet, or social networking tools without the express written consent or other appropriate authority from the owner of the information. If permission is given with certain conditions then follow those conditions. Document the conditions when possible for your files.
2. Agents/employees must recognize that the Company owns the copyright to Company information contained on its web site or in other printed materials. Republishing or copying of this information for other than use in a transaction requires consent of the agent/employee's managing broker (or the designated "Office Internet Consultant" identified on page ____ of this manual) so long as the information includes the following: copyrighted or © by SSS REALTORS ®. If agents/employees have any questions about intended use or how to show the copyright, contact the managing broker or the Office Internet Consultant.

Linking

1. Agents/employees shall review the content of any Internet site to which they might link. Agents/employees shall obtain the consent of the site owner before linking.
2. For any questions, the agent/employee should consult with the Company's "Office Internet Consultant," as identified on page _____ of this manual.

Designated Office Internet Consultant

1. The Company designates _____ its Office Internet Consultant to whom all questions regarding the business use of e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools should be directed.
2. Agents/employees should contact the Office Internet Consultant to report suspected illegal, unethical or inappropriate use of e-mail, the Internet or social networking tools by other agents/employees.

Policy Changes

The Company reserves the right to modify, amend, or change this policy in any manner at any time. Violation of this policy will subject you to discipline as provided for in this Policy Manual.