

Social Media Policy for Employees

Background:

The advent of social media has revolutionized the way in which people connect, communicate and share information with one another. The social media is a fast communication channel and has 'viral' ability for potential spread of information without any control. Moreover the views expressed in Social Media are permanent memory in the internet with no option to backtrack.

Being a commercial organization, reputation is a key asset for our Bank. Bank handles public money and has the responsibility of maintaining secrecy and holding trust of the customers. Bank has to comply with various regulatory & cross border transaction guidelines. In this context, Bank has Information Security, Email, Customer Right, Spokesperson(s) and other data/operations related policies, which are to be complied with.

Therefore, while using social media employees should ensure that his/her act in a manner that is anyway does not:

- a. Breach their commitment on customer data secrecy
- b. Cause loss of confidence to the stake holders
- c. Lead to noncompliance of the regulatory, judicial & Bank's internal guidelines
- d. Erode the Bank's Brand image

Need for Social Media Policy:

The increasing use of social media among the employees and its consequent impact has made it necessary to create guidelines for employees with regard to use of social media.

Coverage and Scope:

The policy covers all employees working at all levels and grades in bank.

The Social Media Policy Guidelines are intended to help employees make appropriate decisions about use of social media. These guideline supplements the existing guidelines on HR matters and it does not substitute any of them. This is also in supplement to Bank's guidelines on Information security, Internet use, e-mail usage, Customer Right Policy, Policy on Spokesperson(s) etc. These are indicative and are not to be construed as only guideline, the general principle of responsible employee will continue to hold good.

Definition of Social Media:

Social media includes all existing, will include all newly emerging electronic/digital communication applications. Although it may not be possible to list all Social Media Platforms, some forms of Social Media include:

- a. Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Google +, Myspace)
- b. Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest, Youtube)
- c. Blogs, including Micro-blogging sites (e.g. Twitter, Tumblr)
- d. Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google/Yahoo/Facebook groups, Quora)
- e. Instant messaging (e.g. Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, Google Hangout, Telegram, Snapchat, Hike, Viber)

Guidelines for use of Social Media:

1. Protecting Bank's Brand Image:

- a. Employees should not post/forward/share/upload anything that puts/ likely to put Bank in bad light or cause loss of confidence to the stake holders or lead to noncompliance of the regulatory, judicial & Bank's internal guidelines or which erodes the Bank's Brand image.
- b. While using social media employees should not speak/post/tweet/blog on behalf of bank or post or forward any unauthorised / casual views, opinions, response which may be construed as the views or opinion or response of the Bank rather than the individual employee view or opinion or response.

2. Observance of Secrecy:

- a. Employees should not post anything which will breach their commitment on customer data secrecy. They should protect confidentiality of the information gathered, collected or handled about the bank, its customers, in the ordinary course of business and it is not to be published in any form or manner.
- b. Employees should not disclose any matter related to Bank to anyone not entitled for the same.

3. Sharing Circulars/Guidelines on Social Media:

- a. Employees should not share/upload matters related to Bank including circulars and other guidelines on social media or any other platform unless it is specifically authorised by Competent Authority.

In order to help prevention of sharing Bank's circulars/guidelines on various social media platforms, Bank has implemented a system which watermarks PF Number of the employee downloading the circular alongwith download date and time.

4. Using Bank Name, Logo, and Office resources:

- a. Employees should not become member of any group/ community or web page which is using name or logo of the Bank, unless such group is expressly created or permitted by the Bank.
- b. Employees, who are on the social media should not create/ join/ promote groups, profiles, blogs etc. by tagging PNB or logo of bank as part of the profile, group, blog etc. as it may mislead the general public about the official status of the site, group, blog etc.
- c. Any existing Group/Profile/Blog using Bank's name/logo in contravention of above guidelines are to be either changed/modified or deleted.
- d. Employees shall not use their social media accounts for endorsement of any product, service or enterprise or for the private gain of friends, relatives or other acquaintances or their own. Also, the employees shall not use their accounts in a manner that could reasonably be construed to imply that the Bank endorses or sanctions their personal activities.
- e. Office resources should not be used for accessing Social Media, unless it is work-related.

5. Use of Social Media during office hours:

- a. The use of social media other than permitted official purpose should take place out of normal working hours.
- b. Access to the Social media (online media activity) should not interfere with the official and customer commitments.
- c. During working hours, employees should restrain from Messaging or use of Chat Applications other than permitted for official purpose.

6. Use of Official Email:

Employee should not use Bank's email address to register on Social Media, Shopping Websites, other profile Creations, etc.

7. Anonymous and pseudonymous postings:

If an employee creates a profile in social media, the employee may do so in his or her personal capacity and should not create any fictitious profile.

8. Criticizing the Bank Management, Processes, Strategies and Policies of Bank:

- a. Employees should not post, forward or upload or share a link containing any false, misleading, defamatory, discriminatory, harassing content/ statements which may damage reputation of bank, its subsidiaries, customers, Management, associates and other staff members.

b. Employees are expected to avoid being part of any discussion/ group whether open, secret or closed, in which other group members are expressing negative views or criticizing the Bank management, its business processes, strategies and policies on Social Media.

9. Articulation of Personal Grievances:

a. Employees should not post or articulate personal grievances in public. It is expected that the internal grievances redressal mechanism and policy guidelines on them shall be followed rather than in the open forum.

10. Communicating in Personal Capacity:

a. Employees to familiarize themselves with the terms of service and privacy policy of all social media sites they wish to participate.

b. Employees to stand by the private or personal views or expressions made and should avoid attribution to Bank and its subsidiaries, customers, Management, associates and other staff members.

c. Employee while posting in blog or any other social media should make it clear that the views and opinions are personal and not the official views of bank and publish following disclaimer:

“The views and opinions expressed or implied herein are my own and does not reflect those of my employer, who shall not be liable for any action that may result as a consequences of my views / opinions”.

d. The employees are expected to consider/asses consequences carefully before posting/uploading/forwarding/sharing anything. Be aware that what is written/posted/forwarded in Social Media is public and permanent.

e. The employees are expected to verify the facts/content before posting/forwarding any information as it may be false, inaccurate, libelous or otherwise misleading and should desist from expressing views/opinions that are based on hearsay and speculative.

f. Refrain from self publicity through social media channels which might compromise with duties/ responsibilities as a Bank employee.

g. Respect the privacy of other fellow employees, customers and should not use un-parliamentary language, insults, inflammatory, objectionable, obscenity in any communication.

h. Material in breach of copyright or Intellectual Property should not be posted.

Consequences of Breach

Various provisions of Punjab National Bank Officer Employees' (Conduct) Regulations provide guidelines that every officer employee shall, at all times take all possible steps to ensure and protect the interests of the bank and maintain the strictest secrecy regarding the Bank's affairs.

Further, as per Bipartite Settlement dated 10.04.2002, unauthorised disclosure of information regarding the affairs of the bank or any of its customers or any other person connected with the business of the Bank which is confidential or the disclosure of which is likely to be prejudicial to the interests of the bank and doing any act prejudicial to the interest of the bank or gross negligence or negligence involving or likely to involve the bank in serious loss, is a 'gross misconduct'.

All employees are expected to comply with Bank's instruction regarding use of social media at all times to protect the privacy, confidentiality and interest of the Bank.

Any violation of these guidelines will attract Disciplinary Action under the provisions of PNB Officer Employees' (Discipline & Appeal) Regulations, 1977 or Bipartite Settlement as amended from time to time. This Policy will be reviewed annually.