



**Social Media Policy:
New York City Bar Committees, Panels and Related Programs or Groups (“Entities”)**

Using Social Media

Social media easily and inexpensively allows an association to interact with its members and the public and can facilitate member-to-member dialog. Social media include, but are not limited to, blogging, microblogging (e.g., Twitter), social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn), and interactive multimedia sites like YouTube.

The New York City Bar Association (City Bar) supports the use of social media to increase member engagement, build community, and improve access to information, resulting in greater value to our members and the public. These tools are another method to communicate with a variety of audiences, but may not be appropriate in all instances or for all kinds of outreach.

The following policy applies to the City Bar’s committees, panels and related programs or groups (“entities”) wishing to create or maintain a social media presence that identifies itself as being sponsored by, administered by or affiliated with the City Bar or City Bar committee.

No member or entity of the City Bar or other person is authorized to utilize the name or logo of the City Bar or City Bar entity as the name of the social media network or as the contact for the network without the approval of the City Bar’s Communications Department. In addition, no City Bar member is authorized to utilize the name or logo of the City Bar in a manner that suggests the City Bar endorses or supports the member’s social media communications that are other than communications approved under City Bar auspices as set forth in the previous sentence.

Administering the Social Media Site

Each City Bar entity desiring a social media presence must initially contact and work with the City Bar’s Communications Department (Communications) to determine the entity’s objectives and the proper social media venues for the entity. Communications must at all times have on file the up-to-date login and password information for all social media.

To create consistency and community on the web, the City Bar has established standard logo, templates and disclaimers. The logo, templates and disclaimers must be used on all social media sites administered by City Bar entities. The City Bar will work with the entity to coordinate the development of the social media graphic and other site requirements.

Each entity is responsible for appointing a site administrator, for content development and management and compliance with the City Bar social networking guidelines.

The City Bar reserves the right to remove any content deemed inappropriate or not in keeping with these guidelines.

Content and Language

No City Bar social media site should contain content or language that:

- a) Is unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, slanderous, obscene or sexually explicit, defamatory, libelous, or that violates anyone's privacy or publicity rights;
- b) Discriminates against, degrades or intimidates an individual or group on the basis of sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, race, color, religion, ethnicity, country of origin, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic predisposition, carrier status or other characteristic protected by law;
- c) Is false, deceptive, misleading or deceitful;
- d) Is not relevant to the subject matter of the site; or
- e) Presents a position on an issue that reasonably could be attributed to the City Bar or a City Bar committee without that position being approved by the President pursuant to the By-laws of the City Bar.

Guidelines for Social Networking

Abide by the social network's rules. By joining a particular social network, the entity agrees to abide by the community's terms of use.

Exercise good judgment. Remember what you post online will live online forever and can be seen and commented upon by anyone. Do not post anything intemperate or that would not reflect well on you and on the City Bar. Entities and individuals who fail to exercise good judgment, or who fail to comply with these guidelines, may forfeit the right to participate in the social networking activities sponsored by the City Bar.

Communicate in a manner consistent with City Bar positions and communications. Avoid conveying positions in a manner that might be interpreted as a City Bar position unless it is a position approved by the President (Communications can advise you on what positions the City Bar has taken). We recognize that City Bar entities may communicate other information regarding issues of concern to the entity; if so it must be in an objective manner without endorsing, or seeming to favor, a position that the City Bar has not adopted.

Be quick to correct an error. If an error is made, acknowledge it and quickly provide the correct information. As a general rule, do not edit the original post; rather, post a separate correction.

Avoid anonymity. Use your real name and the entity's real name. Do not use anonymous screen names to comment on City Bar social media sites, and understand that anonymity cannot be assumed or maintained indefinitely on the Web. When appropriate, make it clear you are speaking for yourself and not on the City Bar's behalf.

Be responsible. Entities are responsible for the material they post. If you are unsure about whether to post something, Communications can help you judge whether it is appropriate, so do not hesitate to ask. Do not post private or proprietary information or positions not approved by the City Bar. Keep posts relevant to the entity's mission and/or goals.

Be ethical. When posting content to any social network, adhere to and comply with all statutory prescriptions, legal restrictions and obligations governing professional conduct including those regulating communication, advertising and the privacy of individuals, and confidential information of clients.

Avoid politics. As a membership organization, the City Bar must avoid the appearance of supporting, endorsing or financially supporting candidates for political office. This does not preclude the Judiciary Committee from announcing the results of its evaluations.

Keep it relevant/add value. Information adds value if it contributes to the legal community's knowledge or skills, improves the legal system or public understanding of the legal system, directly relates to City Bar activities, or builds a sense of community.

Follow copyright and fair use laws. Always give proper credit. It is standard practice to quote a couple or a few sentences along with a link to others' work, along with attribution. Be mindful of more extensive use of others' work. In no circumstances should others' work be reproduced in its entirety on City Bar related sites without permission. When in doubt as to the proprietary nature of the material, do not use it. Recognize the potential professional and legal consequences of any failure to follow applicable laws governing the use of others' materials. When in doubt ask Communications or the City Bar General Counsel.

Use care in marketing. You may use social media to promote your entity's programs and services. You must not promote or advertise another organization's, entity's or individual's goods or services, legal or otherwise, or fundraising efforts.

Do not violate antitrust laws. Antitrust laws prohibit postings that encourage or facilitate agreements between City Bar members concerning the following, as they pertain to legal services: prices, discounts or terms/conditions of sales, salaries, profits, profit margins or cost data, market shares, sales territories or markets, allocation of customers or suppliers or any other term or condition related to competition.

Link to home page. A direct link back to the main page of the City Bar must be provided on all social media pages.