

HOW TO.....MANAGE SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE WORKPLACE

The use of social media in the workplace

The use of social media as a key form of communication has become very common in recent years.

It now forms part of everyday life for both individuals and organisations.

If used well it can be a great way of communicating with employees, customers and other key stakeholders.

If used inappropriately however, it can damage an employer's reputation.

Common types of social media

Facebook	Tumblr
Facebook Messenger	Twitter
Gab	Viber
Google+	WeChat
Instagram	Weibo
LinkedIn	WhatsApp
Pinterest	Wikia
YouTube	Snapchat

The law and the use of social media in the workplace

Inappropriate use of social media can lead to breaches of data protection regulations, as well as defamation, harassment and discrimination, which are all unlawful.

In all cases, a claim can be made against you as the employer, as you may be considered vicariously liable for your employees' actions if you're unable to demonstrate you put processes in place to avoid inappropriate use of social media by your employees.

Guidelines for employers

Employees are entitled to use social media in a personal capacity, however, to protect your business' reputation, and the privacy of your employees, customers, clients and other key stakeholders you should consider the following:

- ✓ Make sure your managers understand the law as it relates to actions associated with the use of social media, and their responsibilities.

Ensure they lead by example and do not post anything inappropriate.

Don't allow them to ignore inappropriate use of social media.

- ✓ Provide clear written guidelines for your employees on what they can and can't say about your business. These can be outlined in your handbook or a Social Media policy.

You should also cross reference this to your disciplinary, equal opportunities, and harassment policies, ensuring that employees understand the consequences of any misuse of social media.

Make it clear that a negative, defamatory or damaging post or communication by an employee may result in disciplinary action.

Outline that this could be up to and possibly including dismissal, irrespective of whether this took place at work, or at home and in their own time.

- ✓ Ensure your employees are aware of your rules.

Consider workplace notices or newsletters, as well as issuing a copy of the handbook and policies to everyone.

I hope you found this guide useful. Contact me at Karen@KDHRSolutions.com if you would like more information