YMCA of Greater Montgomery
Volunteer Social Media Policy

The YMCA of Greater Montgomery recognizes the importance of the Internet in shaping public thinking about our organization and our current and potential services. We also recognize the importance of our volunteers joining in and helping shape industry conversation and direction through interaction in social media. It is the responsibility of every YMCA of Greater Montgomery volunteer to deliver on the Y’s promise and mission and to project and further the mission.

We understand that the internet and social media platforms are constantly changing, but there are certain principles that remain constant. While it is your right to use social media (Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram etc.), everything you post, and share can be viewed by others and may be a reflection of the YMCA of Greater Montgomery. To ensure that the YMCA of Greater Montgomery remains an emotionally safe and supportive environment for all staff, members, volunteers and participants—and specifically to create an environment where sexual abuse and bullying are not tolerated—the following policies are in place. Failure to comply with the policies listed below may result in termination of volunteer service and/or legal recourse.

Electronic Communication Code of Conduct
Volunteers of the YMCA of Greater Montgomery are prohibited from using personal profiles on social networking sites, personal email and other means of internet communication to contact YMCA members in outside of official sanctioned YMCA internet communications who are under the age of eighteen (18).

Appropriate Communication
Examples of appropriate communication include (but are not limited to):
- Sending and replying to text messages from youth ONLY when copying an adult leader or the youth’s parent
- Communicating through “group pages” on Facebook or other designated public forums
- “Private” profiles for volunteers and staff which youth cannot access

Inappropriate Communication
Examples of inappropriate communication include (but are not limited to):
- Private messaging between volunteers and youth
- Photos/content that could be considered violent or threatening.
- References to/photos of illegal use of alcohol, illegal drugs/illicit substances.
- Photos/content that is sexually suggestive or revealing or could be considered objectionable.
- Photos/content that may be considered insulting, offensive, defamatory to individuals/organizations.
- Participant/staff/guests’ confidential or private information.
- Comments or communications that could be considered to be bullying or demeaning of any individual or group.
- Any other content that is inconsistent with the YMCA of Greater Montgomery volunteer code of conduct, or mission.

Everything is Public
Volunteers should keep in mind that whatever is published on their social media sites is public, regardless of privacy settings. The opportunity for followers to take screenshots makes even private accounts—or deleted posts—susceptible to being shared publicly. Parents and members will often search online for profiles, so be mindful of how your online presence may be perceived.

Volunteers Represent Us
Content included on a volunteer’s social media profile may be a reflection of the YMCA of Greater Montgomery and should align with the organization’s policies and expectations, regardless of whether or not the volunteer identifies themselves as such on their profile. Volunteers are expected to be responsible for editing and managing their social media profiles to ensure that they do not contain inappropriate content. This includes posts made prior to volunteer service.

Factual Content
Information can spread quickly online and can easily be misinterpreted or taken out of context. Any posts that reference the YMCA of Greater Montgomery or include a link to the organization’s website, should reflect the organization in a positive light and include only accurate, public information. Obtain prior written approval before citing/referencing staff, volunteers, participants, partners or suppliers. Do not use social media to expose
the organization’s internal policies, programs, strategies, financials, products, etc. Volunteers must specify, when necessary, that any content they post is their own view/belief, and not the stance of the YMCA of Greater Montgomery

**PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

**Public Communication Only**
Predators will often use social media to gain access to or groom children prior to abuse. That’s why connecting with children individually on any of your social media platforms is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes private messaging, the sharing of social media accounts, the exchange of cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses, as well as physical mailing addresses. “Good intentions” and “harmless gestures” do not excuse private communication with underage children, as such actions can be misinterpreted.

**Report Communication/Connections/Contact**
If you already have an outside connection with a child within the organization, or a child tries to initiate an outside connection, report this to appropriate YMCA staff immediately and discuss appropriate next steps, (e.g. block the request, parent communication, or privatizing account settings).

**Photo Use**
Taking unauthorized photographs/videos of members or participants, guests, volunteers, or children is prohibited, regardless of whether or not volunteers choose to share those photos/videos to personal social media platforms. If pictures are needed for the YMCA of Greater Montgomery’s website, flyers, social media etc., they are to be taken by designated/approved staff or volunteer only and must be accompanied by a signed photo release form to be kept on file.

*If I have any further questions or need clarification on anything in this policy I will review with appropriate YMCA staff before posting any content that I am unsure about. I have read and understand the above guidelines and I agree to their terms.*

**Volunteer Name (Print)_________________________**

**Volunteer Signature_________________________________________**

**Date_________________________**