

## Social Media and Media Relations

### Policy:

MSS will not allow the use of social media of any kind to interfere with the promise of confidentiality made to the people we support and the people we employ; to negatively impact the therapeutic relationship the agency values with the people we support; or to sully the reputation of the agency. All media relations are to be funneled through the Executive Director.

### Procedure:

MSS does not regularly monitor the activities of any staff person on any social media platform. Any activities that come to the attention of MSS through the activities or report of the people we support, the people we employ, or our community partners as being in violation of this policy will warrant investigation. Action will be taken to the degree that it can be determined that the activities of any staff person is in violation of this policy, with specific actions taken being determined by the severity of the violation or its impact on the agency.

Violations involving any breach of confidentiality will be addressed as outlined in Policy 1.6: Assurance of Confidentiality, which includes the following wording:

Failure to comply with the confidentiality guidelines is a Class 3 misdemeanor and the staff member may be subject to a fine of up to \$500. In addition, the staff member shall be subject to disciplinary action, suspension or termination from Morgan Support Services as governed by the State Personnel Act, G.S. Chapter 126.

Violations which negatively impact the therapeutic relationship the agency values with the people we support will be addressed on a case by case basis. It is known that employees may have established friendships with the people we support and their families which may include interactions on Facebook and through other social media. While these relationships are not forbidden, MSS reserves the right to demand an end to any such social media interactions which are determined by the legally responsible person and/or the treatment team of the person we support to be detrimental to the person in any way. MSS staff are encouraged not to initiate or respond to social media contacts with people we support to avoid a breakdown of the therapeutic relationships that the agency works hard to foster.

Violations which involve disparaging comments about the agency will be dealt with on a case by case basis with disciplinary actions possible up to and including immediate termination.

Staff are expected to refrain from any social media activities they feel may be in violation of this policy. Claim of verbal approval from a member of management,

a person we support, or the family of a person we support will not be sufficient to avoid disciplinary repercussions regarding violations of this policy.

MSS maintains a presence in various social media, including Facebook. The agency also maintains a website. These platforms are strictly controlled by the Executive Director. Nothing may be posted, modified, added, or linked to any of these platforms without the direct consent of the Executive Director. This control is necessary to ensure that the agency abides by its promise to protect confidential information as well as to honor the request regarding use of pictures and videos of the people we support.

The Executive Director is solely charged with and responsible for media relations as they relate to the agency. All media requests for information must be funneled through the Executive Director. No person may claim to be speaking on behalf of the agency without the express written permission of the Executive Director. Violations of this policy will be addressed on an individual basis with disciplinary actions possible up to and including immediate termination.

### GroupMe

The GroupMe application whose use is a required function of employment with MSS is used to coordinate activities throughout the community, for accountability of staff movements during business hours, and to disseminate timely information to staff. At times the application may be used to post information and pictures related to the activities of folks we support. Only MSSIDs may be used to identify the people we support.