



# **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR VOLUNTEER LEADERS**

The Kansas City Regional Association of REALTORS® (KCRAR) and Heartland MLS (HMLS) use social media as an integral part of our communications strategy and recognize that our volunteer leaders, members, media outlets, and consumers also use social media as part of their role or in their private lives. As such, we have created written policies with guidelines on the acceptable use of social media for volunteer leaders who are the face of the organization.

KCRAR/HMLS encourages the responsible, thoughtful use of social media. The purpose of this policy is to set out what is expected from volunteer leaders when using social media.

**We are all ambassadors of the organization, and while social media is personal, it is not private.**

This policy is solely for volunteer leaders and aims to:

- Give clear guidelines on what volunteers can say about the organization;
- Help volunteers draw a line between their private lives and their volunteering;
- Create dialogue online in a respectful environment;
- Protect KCRAR/HMLS against liability for the actions of volunteers;
- Be clear about sensitive issues such as monitoring and explain how problems with inappropriate use will be addressed.

## 1. Policy statement

- A. KCRAR/HMLS recognizes that the internet provides unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and share information on topics related to the Association on many social media platforms.

**This policy aims to protect individuals volunteering with us in any role and to encourage you to take responsibility for what you write, and exercise good judgment and common sense.**

- B. Inappropriate use of social media can pose risks to our reputation, confidential and proprietary information, and can jeopardize our compliance with legal obligations. To minimize our risk and ensure that our resources are being used appropriately, we expect volunteer leaders to adhere to this policy.

## 2. Scope and purpose of the policy

- A. This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and **all** other social networking sites, blogs, and internet postings.
- B. This policy extends to the use of social media both for volunteer and personal purpose, as often they are very closely related. The policy applies regardless of where social media is accessed and if equipment used is personal or owned by KCRAR/HMLS.
- C. All volunteers are expected to be familiar with this policy and adhere to it.
- D. If volunteer leaders are found to be in violation of this policy, the CEO and/or Executive Committee will address it. This may include a required removal of any internet posts deemed to be in breach of this policy.

## 3. Guidelines for responsible use of social media

The following sections of the policy provide volunteers with common-sense guidelines and recommendations for using social media responsibly and safely.

- A. We want you to help protect our business reputation. Volunteers must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about:
- Kansas City Regional Association of REALTORS® (KCRAR)
  - Heartland MLS (HMLS)
  - KCRAR/HMLS staff, clients, volunteers, or members (past or present);
  - Suppliers and vendors; and
  - Other affiliates and stakeholders.

Volunteers should also avoid social communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly.

- B.** Volunteers are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media (as part of their role or on personal sites). Remember that what you publish might be available to be read by the masses, including REALTOR® members, colleagues, volunteers, future employers, and social acquaintances for a long time. Keep this in mind before you post content.
- There is no obligation for volunteers to link their personal social media to any KCRAR/HMLS social media; however, it is encouraged that when posting professional/association information, you do so when appropriate.
  - KCRAR/HMLS encourages you to thoughtfully consider your message prior to posting, whether it is of a personal or professional nature.
- C.** Volunteer leaders are not permitted to set up social media accounts for volunteer-related purposes (ex. including your volunteer title in your name).
- D.** If you disclose your affiliation as a volunteer of KCRAR/HMLS, you must also state that your views do not represent those of the organization you are volunteering with. For example, you could state, “the views in this posting are my own and do not represent the views of Kansas City Regional Association of REALTORS® or Heartland MLS.” You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the image you present to those you work with as part of your volunteering role.
- E.** Extra care by officers and spokespersons: KCRAR/HMLS officers and spokespersons shall always conduct themselves as professional representatives of the organization and should understand that their personal online activity and commentary can be construed as speaking for the organization, due to the nature of their positions. Accordingly, extra care must be taken. Content and tenor of online activity should model the same decorum displayed during official Association appearances, meetings or events.
- F.** Never post anything threatening, harassing, bullying or defamatory or that could be disparaging to others based on race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or any status protected by law or organizational policy.
- G.** Respect confidentiality at all times and protect confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our work, details of current projects, future projects, financial information or information held on our supporters, staff or volunteers.
- H.** If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on KCRAR/HMLS or our stakeholders, you should report it to the CEO and/or the Director of Communications. All volunteers are responsible for protecting our reputation.