



EL BUEN PASTOR

LATINO COMMUNITY SERVICES

El Buen Pastor Latino Community Services Social Media Policy

Overview

El Buen Pastor Latino Community Services (EBPLCS) recognizes that social media outlets (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs, and online discussion boards) continue to change the medium through which organizations and their staff communicate with their participants and supporters, as well as the manner in which they present themselves to the greater community. We also recognize that volunteers and other community supporters are using and will increasingly use social media outlets to keep in contact with the members of the community whom they meet at EBPLCS in order to grow friendships and connections. **Because of the growing importance of social media outlets, it is necessary that we reinforce that social media use must be guided by respect and kindness and safety, the values that hold our community together.**

EBPLCS chooses to encourage its employees' access to social media channels because it wants to empower them to use social media as a tool through which they can help community relationships to grow. EBPLCS strongly believes that it is through living together and sharing our personal experiences that we can have the greatest impact in helping to change people's perceptions about immigrant families and communities.

Guidelines for Employees

While this policy doesn't contain many strict rules about what EBPLCS's employees can or cannot do on social media, it does lay down some guidelines as to how it hopes its employees will conduct themselves while online and in-person.

1. Think before you post

It is important to remember that while posting online, **even if a communication is made through private channels, it can be made public if it is copied, shared, or forwarded.** Also, even if an employee does not overtly link a post or a profile to EBPLCS, a simple online search of the employee's name can reveal that the person is on staff at EBPLCS. With that in mind, EBPLCS urges its employees to think about how any communications would reflect on the organization and the things that it stands for.

This does not mean that EBPLCS's employees should be afraid to post online. On the contrary, **EBPLCS understands that the internet allows for conversations of all types, including those in which our employees should definitely take part.** It is through participation in these conversations that EBPLCS can use its firsthand knowledge to inform debates and breakdown commonly held stereotypes about immigrants in our communities.

2. Be yourself and be honest

It is important that you **be yourself, and stick to what you know** when taking part in online interactions. We suggest that you use your real name, identify that you work for EBPLCS if speaking within your professional role and be clear about your role in the community. **When you are**

transparent in this way, it is more likely that people will respect your opinions and give you credit for having firsthand experience working to empower Latino immigrant families.

Due to EBPLCS's status as a nonprofit, we need to be careful to avoid any type of interaction that could be considered lobbying. Therefore, any and all official communications will be done through the Director of Operations, or a staff member that they designate, via our approved social media pages. **When posting directly on behalf of EBPLCS (on the EBPLCS Facebook page, website, or any other official social media channels), it should be noted that nobody shall use material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous or harassing.**

3. Trust and privacy

While EBPLCS does suggest that you be transparent, **it is necessary to be sure that your transparency does not violate the trust that our community members have in you.** It is understood that EBPLCS plays a daily role in the lives of many of our community members. Because of the central part that we play, we often receive confidential information.

Do not share private information or use the real name of a community member unless they have given you permission to do so. We also ask that you do not post your own photos of our community members unless you have been given permission by either the Director of Operations at EBPLCS or the person in the photo. Never name or tag a child. Anything that has been posted to the internet is on permanent record, so be sure that you are confident that what you are sharing is not something that you or the subject of the post could regret in the future.

4. Personal or professional

In order to create as much space between personal and professional information online, EBPLCS asks that you do not use your work email address to register for any social media profiles. In this way, it makes it easier for people to see that you are posting on your own behalf rather than that of EBPLCS. However, even when you take preventive measures, it is hard to draw the line online between different spheres such as private and public, or personal and professional so **EBPLCS asks that whenever you post anything online that you think about how it will reflect on yourself and the organization.** On your Facebook wall, what you may do in your free-time or on the weekend could be right next to a post about what we did at EBPLCS the week before, so it is necessary to realize that the image that you create online will be directly tied to our organization.

If you are unsure about any postings that you think may reflect poorly on EBPLCS, we suggest that you ask another staff member what they think, or come directly to the Director of Operations.

5. Modeling internet awareness

In the case of minors, **EBPLCS strongly suggests that its employees ask anyone under the age of 18 to "Like" the EBPLCS Facebook page so that they can stay in contact in that internet space rather than directly on a personal Facebook page.** In this way it will be much easier to make sure that no boundaries are crossed concerning relationships between EBPLCS employee and community member.

It is also true, however, that **employees can use controlled social media interactions with community members, especially the children of EBPLCS, to model good internet awareness.** As a role model in our community, EBPLCS employees are in a great position to lead by example in many areas including internet use. If an employee chooses to “Friend” a community member, they should use their knowledge of social media outlets to intentionally draw a line so as to keep that relationship professional. **Knowing one’s privacy settings and placing them at an appropriate level so that not everyone on the internet can see your social media history is suggested. By doing so, employees can set a precedent for their students and other community members.**

6. Using social media at work

Lastly, while EBPLCS does hope that its employees use social media to help the organization’s cause, it is important not to forget your day job. **While at work, it is best if social media is used for work-related material only.**

Guidelines for Volunteers

Volunteers are one of the greatest assets that we have at EBPLCS. Not only do they assist in the programs that are held at EBPLCS, but the friendships that they form while working in our community can and do shape public opinion of the immigrant community. That said, it is important that volunteers always keep in mind that they are often seen as role models by the students and families here at EBPLCS. **Whether volunteers are working as tutors, coaches on a sports club, or otherwise, they are helping to shape the character of the young people with whom they work here.** How they are seen acting or interacting by those young people will often be mimicked. We ask that volunteers use these guidelines to inform their interactions with our students and families, in conjunction with our community values and the Child Abuse Prevention Policy.

1. Interacting with community members below high school

EBPLCS asks that volunteers who are working or who have worked in our programs do not directly contact students that are not yet in high school via social media outlets. During that time, we believe a more constructive way to be in contact with the students of EBPLCS is to interact with them during programs or activities held by EBPLCS.

2. Interacting with community members in or above high school

EBPLCS understands that once students are at a high school age, social media can be more constructively used by volunteers to maintain contact and organize group events with EBPLCS students. **We ask that tutors who are in contact with students via social media sites are thoughtful about how their social media profiles and histories will be seen by students.** Modeling good social media behavior is important, and EBPLCS students can learn from how you handle yourself and your connections on the internet. We recommend that you set a good example to students by using your privacy settings wisely, thereby sharing the information you want to share with only those people with whom you want to share it.

As with staff members, a good method of contact rather than directly “Friending” or “Following” students is to have them “Like” the official EBPLCS Facebook page so that both of you may interact and comment on a page that is viewable by others.