

	DOCTORS NOVA SCOTIA
Section:	BOARD POLICY
Subject:	Social Media Guidelines
Approved by Board:	May 2026

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Social media is an important and influential communication tool that enables individuals and organizations to share information, opinions and experiences quickly and widely. When used responsibly, social media can support professional engagement, knowledge sharing and positive connection. However, social media activity, whether used in a professional or personal capacity, can also carry risks for individuals and organizations.
- 1.2 Doctors Nova Scotia is active on several social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube. The association's social media channels are an extension of the DNS brand, reputation and values.
- 1.3 It is increasingly difficult to separate personal and professional personas on social media accounts. Doctors Nova Scotia recognizes its employees, Board and committee members may participate fully in social media and encourages them to keep in mind that any reference to their work with DNS, even within a personal context, is subject to the spirit of this policy and other related policies.

2.0 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 2.1 Provide guidance for DNS employees, Board and committee members on their personal use of social media.
- 2.2 Provide guidance to reduce the risks of social media activity that can cause harm and damage the association's reputation and brand.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 These guidelines cover all online interactions and activities, whether in relation to DNS official social media accounts, personal accounts or comments made on other feeds, including social media groups that are password protected.

- 3.2 Read and understand the privacy and security provisions governing the social media platform or service you are using. Be aware of changes in privacy guidelines and update your settings appropriately.
- 3.3 Abide by applicable laws, such as copyright, privacy, fair use and financial disclosure.
- 3.4 Do not use DNS logos or trademarks without approval.
- 3.5 You are personally responsible for the content you publish online, whether on social media channels, blogs, forums or any other type of user-generated media.
- 3.6 Think before you post. Content posted on social media may be shared by others without obtaining permission or keeping the original context.
- 3.7 Remember that nothing posted on social media is truly private, regardless of privacy settings. Content is traceable, even if posted anonymously. Posts made in private groups and forums can be shared without your consent via screenshots.
- 3.8 Do not engage in online behaviour or conduct that would be unacceptable in the DNS workplace.
- 3.9 Who you follow, like, share, or interact with on social media can be interpreted by others as support for, alignment with, or endorsement of those individuals or groups, even if you don't intend it that way. It is important to be thoughtful about public associations, understand how their online activity may be interpreted and avoid interactions that conflict with DNS values or respectful workplace standards.
- 3.10 Do not make derogatory or defamatory comments about DNS, its members, employees, policies and associated work.
- 3.11 Do not cite or reference DNS members, employees or partners on social media without their permission, including text, conversations, photos or video content created at DNS events. Do not use content from DNS events to promote a third-party, such as a business, organization or group. Do not publish anything that could draw inferences that could embarrass or damage an employee, member or healthcare partner.
- 3.12 Issues happen and can escalate quickly online. To mitigate risks and protect DNS's brand and reputation, stay aware of what's happening on your social media accounts.

4.0 GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO DNS BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- 4.1 Social media is a key part of DNS's communications strategy and is used to amplify the work of the association, support members and promote physicians as leaders and trusted healthcare providers. Whether intended or not, when physicians who serve on the DNS Board and related committees share content on their personal social media

channels, they are perceived as speaking on behalf of DNS because of their role with the association. The content they share may be linked to DNS, having unintended consequences that can create risk for the association.

- 4.2 In all online interactions, follow the guidelines outlined in the [Respectful Workplace Policy](#) and the [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#) for members of the DNS Board of Directors and committees.
- 4.3 When posting on social media about DNS business, policies or associated work, DNS Board and committee members are expected to reflect the position of the association, not their individual views, as outlined in the [DNS Media Relations Policy](#).
- 4.4 Not officially identifying yourself as a DNS Board or committee member, or using a disclaimer such as “all opinions expressed here are my own,” does not negate the expectations of behaviour described in this policy or the [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#).
- 4.5 Do not discuss private or confidential DNS information on social media, particularly discussions or decisions from the Board that are not public. If you are unsure about what you can share, consult the Board or Committee Chair.
- 4.6 Discuss any concerns about social media content or behaviour with the Board or Committee Chair, who may refer the matter to the CEO.
- 4.7 Stay informed of additional guidelines, policies and standards on social media use that physicians must comply with from other organizations, including the [College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia](#) and the [Canadian Medical Association](#).

5.0 RESOURCES

(Note: All three of the following policies are scheduled for updating in 2026. Links will be updated as the policies are reviewed and approved.)

- 5.1 **Respectful Workplace Policy**
DNS [Respectful Workplace policy](#) for Board and committee members provide guidelines and procedures for addressing offensive behaviour.
- 5.2 **Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy**
The DNS [Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy](#) sets the rules of conduct for members of the Board of Directors and related committees in order to maintain confidence in the integrity, objectivity and transparency of the Board.
- 5.3 **Media Relations Policy**
The [DNS Media Relations Policy](#) provides DNS members, Board and staff with a consistent approach when speaking to media on behalf of DNS. The President is the principal spokesperson for the association.

For any questions on this policy, please contact Charmaine Smith, Director of Corporate Services, at charmaine.smith@doctorsns.com or call 902-223-0998.