# Web & Social Media

Irish Red Cross Policy and ProceduresIntroduction

Social media such as (but not exclusive to) Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Snapchat, YouTube, Instagram and blogging represent a growing form of communication for not-for-profit organisations, allowing them to engage their volunteers, members and the wider public more easily than ever before.

It is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested. The intention of this policy is to give direct guidance to all Irish Red Cross administrators in order to maximise our social media reach while protecting the reputation of the Irish Red Cross.

## Web & Social Media Policy and Procedures apply to:

• Irish Red Cross social media page/account/profile administrators/managers

• Working/Advisory Groups and Subgroups

• Area and Branch Committees (including Units, Youth and Health & Social Care)

• Volunteers/Staff postings in relation to the Society on private pages

This group will be referred to as “Administrators” for the remainder of this document.

## Policy

Irish Red Cross Administrators may choose to engage with stakeholders online using platforms such as:

• Twitter

• Facebook

• Google+

• Instagram

• WordPress/Blogger

• YouTube/Vimeo

• iTunes/Podcasting

• Bespoke websites

The Irish Red Cross seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its membership and to utilise the expertise of its volunteers in generating appropriate web and social media content. At the same time, all online representations of the Society should be in keeping with the 7 Fundamental Principles of the movement and the image that the Irish Red Cross wishes to present. Posts made through web and social media channels should not damage the organisations reputation in any way. Nor associate the organisation with views or influences at odds with the principles.

Web and social media use representative of or associated with the Irish Red Cross shall be consistent with the following:

**Integrity**: Administrators will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about local Red Cross work, the national society, the work of other organisations, state bodies or individuals.

**Professionalism:** Web and social media posts represent the organisation as a whole and should seek to maintain a professional and uniform tone. Volunteers may, from time to time and as appropriate, post on behalf of the Society using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals.

**Information Sharing:** The Irish Red Cross encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims and of interest to its volunteers.

**Administrators** should seek to grow social media reach and use this to engage with existing and potential volunteers, stakeholders and the wider community. At the same time, a professional balance must be struck which avoids placing the reputation of the organisation at risk.

Adherence to National Safeguarding Policy, Statement and Procedures

Administrators for Irish Red Cross social media accounts and profiles must be over 18.

With regard to content displayed on social media pages/profiles – Administrators should to be aware that under 18’s could be viewing these pages and all content should be suitable. Please refer to the [*Irish Red Cross National Safeguarding Policy, Statement and Procedures*](https://www.redcross.ie/wp-content/themes/twentyfourteen/download1.php?filename=/2017/02/Safeguarding-Policy-Statment-and-Procedures-Feb-2017.pdf) for more information.

Pictures: Any picture featuring volunteers under 18 years old require written permission for use in Facebook and elsewhere by the parent/guardian. [*Download consent form*](https://www.redcross.ie/wp-content/themes/twentyfourteen/download1.php?filename=/2015/06/Parental-Consent-Form.pdf).

In relation to personal pages, no adult volunteer of the Irish Red Cross should seek or accept a friend request from a volunteer under the age of 18.

**Set up of Irish Red Cross pages/profiles/accounts**

Social media pages/accounts/websites etc., must be set up as follows:

• 1 x page/account/site/etc. per Irish Red Cross Area (per platform/channel)

• 1 x page/account/site/etc. per Irish Red Cross Branch (per platform/channel)

Area and Branch pages/etc. must be used to promote all aspects of Irish Red Cross activities and services in the area, e.g. Area/Branch, Youth, Unit or Health and Social Care activities.

## Existing Irish Red Cross pages/profiles/accounts/etc.

Existing Irish Red Cross pages/accounts/profiles/etc. must be amended and merged in accordance with the Irish Red Cross Web and Social Media Policy.

## Access

In line with best practice any account/profile/page/website must have two authorised local administrators and the national society requires access through the National Secretary\*.

### The National Secretary must be informed of:

• The name of all persons managing web/social media activities on behalf of the Irish Red Cross for all new and existing social media accounts etc.

• All changes to personnel managing web/social media activities on behalf of the Irish Red Cross for all new and existing social media accounts etc.

• Login details, including passwords.

### The National Secretary must be:

Made an ‘Admin’ to all Irish Red Cross Branch and Area Facebook pages and Groups and also given access to all Irish Red Cross Branch and Area Twitter, Instagram, Google+, Pinterest, Snapchat, Linkedin accounts and websites.

\*Note: Please do not use the National Secretary’s personal profile(s), a position specific profile will be set up.

# PROCEDURE

The National Secretary, on behalf of the Board of Directors, will oversee the Irish Red Cross networks social media management\*.

The National Secretary has ultimate responsibility for:

Ensuring that all posts are in keeping with Society’s Social Media Policy.

Ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken to correct or remove inappropriate posts (including defamatory and/or illegal content) and in minimising the risk of a repeat incident.

Moderating and monitoring public response to social media, such as comments, replies and posts, to ensure that trolling and spamming does not occur, to issue a directive on the removal of offensive or inappropriate replies, or caution people posting offensive material, or material which might be experienced as offensive, and to reply to any further requests for information generated by the post topic.

It is important to maintain the balance between encouraging discussion and information sharing, and maintaining a professional and appropriate online presence.

## Delegation

At local level such responsibilities as outlined above will be delegated by the National Secretary to Area Secretary. This will require frequent communication between both volunteers.

# PROCESSES

## Profiles

All web/social media profiles are owned by the Society, therefore a standard format must be used for management of all. The profile/page must be linked to the official Irish Red Cross Area/Branch Secretary email account (*i.e. secretary.[Area/Branch]@irishredcross.com*). No personal emails or unapproved Irish Red Cross email addresses should be used.

The profile picture to be used must be the approved emblem of the Irish Red Cross. Contact **communications@redcross.ie** for this.

### The profile name can only be:

‘*Irish Red Cross [insert name] Area/Branch*’

Other operational structures and services attached to that Area/Branch may post to the page/account under that profile. Administrators can be added to the page such as program leaders (e.g. Unit Officer/Health & Social Care Officer/ Youth representatives etc.) to allow them to post on the page.

## Posting To Social Media

Before social media posts are made, Administrators should ask themselves the following questions:

• Will this information be of interest to the Irish Red Cross’ volunteers and stakeholders?

• Is this information in keeping with the interests of the Society and its constituted aims?

• Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project?

• Would Irish Red Cross donors be happy to read the post?

• If there is a link attached to the post, does the link work, and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source?

• If reposting information, is the original post by an individual or organisation that the Society would be happy to associate itself with?

• Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by Society? Does it maintain the organisations overall tone?

## Use of Photographs and Images

The value of using photographs/images in work undertaken by the Society, be it as a learning and development tool or in promotion is well established. However, it is necessary for us to use these images responsibly in order to protect our members, the organisation and the use of the images.

• Appropriate images should be used at all times

• Images of under 18’s can only be posted if permission/ consent forms have been completed and following the [Society’s National Safeguarding Policy, Statement and Procedures](https://www.redcross.ie/wp-content/themes/twentyfourteen/download1.php?filename=/2015/06/Parental-Consent-Form.pdf)

• When using external/professional photographers ensure that the Officer in charge/Program Leader has the complete contact details of any photographer that is used.

• Inform any professional photographers that all images taken will remain the property of the organisation, and cannot be used or sold for any other purpose without the Society’s consent.

• Respect trademark and copyright laws make sure you have permission to post any copyrighted images.

NOTE: Particular attention and care must be given when the subject of the image is under the age of 18). At all times the person taking the photo and the person posting/publishing must act within the guidelines of this policy and the [Irish Red Cross National Safeguarding Policy, Statement and Procedures.](https://www.redcross.ie/wp-content/themes/twentyfourteen/download1.php?filename=/2015/06/Parental-Consent-Form.pdf)

## Tagging / “Checking in”

Certain social media sites offer the option of tagging or “checking in” at your current location. Administrators need to be mindful of the fact that this can be viewed by others as an invasion of privacy and can expose them to security risks such as property and vehicles unattended while at events. If you are using such facilities, the following rules apply:

• Tag a photo or check yourself or the Irish Red Cross in at an event (e.g. meeting, duty, national event), never tag anyone who is with you without their consent.

• Written consent (email will suffice) must be gained in advance of the event.

• Never tag under 18’s [Refer to National Safeguarding Policy, Statement and Procedures]

• Never ‘check-in’ online at a medical centre or care facility or while transporting a patient.

## Damage Limitation

In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the National Secretary should be notified as soon as possible (*National.Secretary@Irishredcross.com*) and directives will be issued, generally in line with the following actions:

• The offending post should be removed.

• Where necessary an apology should be issued to the individual or organisation involved.

• The origin of the offending post should be explored and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

If the mistake seems set to grow, or to cause significant damage to the Society’s reputation you may be directed to close down the page/account/site.

## Moderating Social Media and Websites

Maintaining the good reputation of the Society is paramount, and this involves maintaining a safe and friendly environment for its members.

From time to time social media forums may be targeted by trolls or spammers, or attract people who attack other users or the Society aggressively. In order to maintain a balanced environment for everybody, these posts need to be moderated.

Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts contain one or more of the following, steps will be taken to address the situation:

• Excessive or inappropriate language

• Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on the Irish Red Cross, its staff, volunteers/members, other individuals, organisations, projects or the state and public figures

• Breach of copyrighted material

• Breach of data protection

• Repetitive advertisements

• Topics which fall outside the realms of interest to members and stakeholders, and which do not appear to be within the context of a legitimate discussion or enquiry.

If a post appears only once:

• Remove the post as soon as possible

• If possible/appropriate, contact the person posting privately to explain why you have removed the post and highlighting Irish Red Cross Social Media Policy posting guidelines. If a person continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam:

• Remove the post as soon as possible

• Ban or block the person to prevent them from posting again

Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort only, and only when it is clear that the person intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the welfare of other social media users.

The decision to block, ban and remove posts ultimately lies with the National Secretary.

## Complaints

On detection of a post which raises concern, the relevant Secretary (Area/Branch) should be notified immediately. If you feel the issue has not been appropriately addressed you should contact the National Secretary.

\*The National Secretary will be assisted by the Irish Red Cross Communications team, in Merrion Square, in the management and monitoring of all web and social media representations of the Society.

# Official Irish Red Cross Web & Social Media Sites include:

[www.redcross.ie](http://www.redcross.ie)

[www.irishredcrossblog.ie](http://www.irishredcrossblog.ie)

[www.facebook.com/irishredcross](http://www.facebook.com/irishredcross)

[www.facebook.com/irishredcrossyouth](http://www.facebook.com/irishredcrossyouth)

[www.twitter.com/irishredcross](http://www.twitter.com/irishredcross)

[www.twitter.com/irc\_youth](http://www.twitter.com/irc_youth)

[www.instagram.com/irishredcross](http://www.instagram.com/irishredcross)

[www.youtube.com/irishredcross](http://www.youtube.com/irishredcross)

[www.linkedin.com/company/irishredcross](http://www.linkedin.com/company/irishredcross)

[www.flickr.com/irishredcross](http://www.flickr.com/irishredcross)