

# Sutter Health and Affiliate Guidelines for Participation in Online Communities

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These are the official guidelines for social media across the Sutter Health network. In your role as an employee, physician, volunteer or other associate of Sutter Health or its affiliates, are you creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds or any other kind of social media? If your answer is yes, these guidelines are for you.

We expect all who participate in social media on behalf of or with Sutter Health and its affiliates to understand and follow these guidelines. Failure to do so could have a negative impact on our organization and could jeopardize your ability to participate as an employee in social media in the future.

The guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge, so check back from time to time to ensure you're up to date.

## When You Engage as a Representative of Our Organization

Platforms for online collaboration are fundamentally changing the way we work, offering new ways to engage with patients, colleagues and our community at large. They're new models for interaction, and we believe social computing can help you build stronger, more successful business and professional relationships. If as part of your role with Sutter Health or its affiliates you participate in social media, please follow these guiding principles:

- Post meaningful, respectful comments, and refrain from remarks that are off-topic or offensive.
- Reply to comments quickly when a response is appropriate.
- Know and follow the state and federal laws *that* protect patient confidentiality at all times.
- Protect proprietary information and confidentiality.
- When disagreeing with others' opinions, keep it tempered.
- Know your *Sutter Health or affiliate Employee Handbook* and *Standards for Business Conduct*, and apply the standards and principles in your social computing.
- Know and follow the *Sutter Health and Affiliates' Policy for Social Networking*.

## Rules of Engagement

### Protect the patient.

Never post any information that can be used to identify a patient's identity or health condition in any way. Protecting patient confidentiality and patient health information is everyone's number one responsibility.

### Be judicious.

Make sure your efforts to be transparent don't violate Sutter Health and affiliates' privacy, confidentiality and communication policies. Ask permission from your supervisor to publish or report on conversations or information that are even potentially private or internal to Sutter Health or one of its affiliated entities. What you publish in written, audio or video form will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and be judicious. Also, please respect brand, trademark, copyright, fair use and confidentiality laws. If you have any questions about these, see your Sutter Health or region legal representative.

**Participation is a privilege.**

What you write, produce or record is ultimately your responsibility. Participation in social computing on behalf of Sutter Health or an affiliate is not a right and it therefore needs to be taken seriously and with respect. Know and follow our *Standards for Business Conduct*. Failure to abide by these guidelines could put your participation at risk and can lead to discipline if you are a Sutter Health or affiliate employee. For third-party sites, please also follow their terms and conditions.

**Be a Leader.**

There can be a fine line between healthy debate and incendiary reaction. Do not denigrate our competitors, Sutter Health or our affiliates. Try to frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. Some topics—like politics or religion for example—may not be appropriate for Sutter Health network communications. So be careful and considerate. Once the words or other materials are out there, you can't really get them back. And once an inflammatory discussion gets going, it's hard to stop.

**Respect other people's information.**

It's simple—other people's information belongs to them whether it is intellectual property or personal information. It is their choice to share their material, not yours. Before posting someone else's material, check with the owner for permission. If you're unsure, legal counsel from Sutter Health or your region can provide guidance.

**If it gives you pause, pause.**

If you're about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, don't shrug it off and hit send. Take a minute to review these guidelines and try to figure out what's bothering you, and then fix it. If you're still unsure, you might want to discuss it with your manager or legal representative.

<b>Rules of Composition</b>
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**Write what you know and remember it's a conversation.**

Ensure you write and post about your areas of expertise, especially as it relates to Sutter Health, an affiliate or medical care. And write it in the first person. Talk to your readers like you would talk to real people in professional situations. In other words, avoid overly "composed" language. Don't be afraid to bring in your own personality and say what's on your mind. Consider content that's open-ended and invites response. Encourage comments. You also can broaden the conversation by citing others who are blogging about the same topic and allowing your content to be shared or syndicated.

**Are you adding value?**

There are millions of ideas out there. The best way to get attention for yours is to produce material people will value. Social communication from our Sutter Health network should help our patients, partners, and co-workers. It should be thought-provoking and build a sense of community. If it helps people improve knowledge or skills; become healthier; or understand Sutter Health or an affiliate better—then it's adding value.

**Quality matters.**

Use a spell-checker. You don't have to be a great or even a good writer to succeed at this, but you do have to make an effort to be clear, complete and concise. There are very few first drafts that can't be shortened and improved.

**Did you make a mistake?**

If you make a mistake, admit it. Be upfront and be quick with your correction. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post. Just make it clear that you have done so.

<b>No Anonymous Content</b>
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Anonymous content is defined as a comment, reply or post submitted to a Sutter Health or affiliate site where the user has not registered and is not logged into the site. Anonymous content is not allowed on Sutter Health o sites.

<b>Personal Use of Third-Party Sites during Work Hours</b>
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E-mail and Internet access is provided to support Sutter Health or affiliate business purposes. If you have access to these tools, you may make incidental personal use of them. Be mindful that you may not make "extensive" personal use of the tools during work or non-work time. Your supervisor has the right and responsibility to determine what is "extensive use" and to revoke access privileges for abuse of the system.

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