

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
OF
MASSACHUSETTS PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

APPROVED MARCH 7, 2021

ARTICLE 1

Section 1. Purpose and Mission. The purpose of the Massachusetts Paralegal Association's (the "**MPA**" or "**Organization**") Social Media Policy (the "**Policy**") is to outline how the Organization and its members should conduct themselves when using Social Media affiliated with the MPA and to ensure that the content aligns with the MPA's Purpose (the "**Purpose**") as defined in Article I Section IV of the By-laws which is to (i) promote high professional and ethical standards in the education, training and employment of paralegals, (ii) serve as a source of educational and career information for members, the legal community and the general public and to provide networking opportunities for paralegals and paralegal students and (iii) promote the general professional interest of paralegals.

Section 2. Definitions.

"**Social Media**" means any technology affiliated with MPA and used for the purpose of sharing information and furthering the Purpose including, but are not limited to, video, or Wiki posts, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Zoom, YouTube, Snapchat, chat room, podcasts and discussion forums and newsletters. This Policy also includes future Social Media and any applications that may not yet be contemplated.

"**By-laws**" means the Amended and Restated By-laws of the Massachusetts Paralegal Association, Inc

"**Member**" means any individual under the four classes of MPA members pursuant to Article II Section I of the By-laws;

- (a) Voting Member: Any person employed as a paralegal, or in a position with duties comparable to those of a paralegal as defined by National Federal Paralegal Association. The NFPA's definition of paralegal as currently defined and as amended from time to time is: "A paralegal is a person qualified through education, training or work experience to perform substantive legal work that requires knowledge of legal concepts and is customarily, but not exclusively, performed by a lawyer. This person may be retained or employed by a lawyer, law office, governmental agency or other entity or may be authorized by administrative, statutory or court authority to perform this work. Substantive shall mean work requiring recognition, evaluation, organization, analysis, and communication of relevant facts and legal concepts". Voting members shall be the only class of members entitled to vote on any matter put before the membership of the MPA. Neither a disbarred attorney nor an incarcerated person may become a member. Notwithstanding the above, any paralegal employed as a paralegal at the time of membership or last renewal shall be permitted to retain his/her membership as a voting paralegal for the duration of his/her current membership and renewal, upon termination of employment. In no case shall such postemployment membership duration be greater than twenty-four (24) months.

- (b) Associate Member: Any individual who was formerly employed as a paralegal (but does not qualify as a post-employment voting member) or has graduated from a paralegal program but is not currently employed as a paralegal;
- (c) Student Member: Students currently enrolled in a paralegal education program at the time of their joining the MPA; and
- (d) Sustaining Member: Organizations, companies, agencies, law firms or individuals concerned with betterment of the paralegal profession by providing services, good or help to fund paralegal education and membership activities.

"MPA Custodian(s)" means any elected Officer or member of the Board of Directors of the MPA who has been appointed by the President, with the consent of the Board of Directors, to manage a Social Media platform(s) for the MPA:

ARTICLE 2

RULES

Section 1. Representing the MPA. Each MPA Custodian, when managing MPA Social Media platforms, is expected to act carefully and responsibly to protect the Organization's image and reputation and the following principles must be followed:

- (a) **Respectful Exchanges.** MPA Custodian(s) represent the MPA and therefore must ensure content and communications on MPA Social Media platforms is respectful and polite. Declarations or promises to Members, industry colleagues, or partners are prohibited.
- (b) **Laws.** Communications and content on MPA Social Media platforms must comply with all applicable laws including those which govern intellectual property including copyright and trademarks and laws pertaining to plagiarism, and fair use.
- (c) **High-Impact Content.** MPA Custodian's must obtain the consent of the MPA President [*president@massparalegal.org*] prior to sharing any content that could potentially impact the brand of the MPA or is considered High-Impact Content.
 - 1) MPA defines "**High-Impact Content**" as content designed to evoke an emotional response, leverage influencers or provocateurs, is political, religious, potentially viewed as biased, and has viral features built in to reach viewers outside of the Organization's scope.
 - 2) Prior to approving High Impact Content the MPA President may determine it necessary to convene an ad-hoc meeting to discuss the content. Minutes of any ad-hoc meeting discussing High-Impact Content must be taken and provided to the MPA Clerk for filing.
- (d) **Ignoring comments.** Ignoring or deleting comments should be avoided. MPA Custodian(s) should listen and reply in a respectful manner to criticism and avoid deleting comments unless the comments do not align with this Purpose, this Policy and/or the MPA By-laws.
- (e) **Discriminatory, offensive, or libelous Content.** Discriminatory, offensive, or libelous content and commentary is prohibited and must be removed as soon as possible.
- (f) **Intelligent, Professional Content.** All Content must be professional with the intent to strengthen the community of the MPA. MPA Custodian(s) must ensure content is helpful, valuable, and promotes the Purpose, principles and goals the MPA.

- (g) **Personal and political agendas.** Personal and political communications are prohibited and must be removed. MPA is not a platform for personal posts, and MPA is not affiliated with any political party.
- (h) **Uniformity.** MPA Custodians should aim for uniformity with searchable hashtags across platforms. For example, the following hashtags should be used: *#massparalegal* and *#MPA*. Other hashtags can be used as deemed appropriate.
- (i) **Misleading Information.** Misleading or false content is prohibited and must be removed as quickly as possible.
- (j) **Events.** Event information should be shared in a coordinated way that incorporates approved photos and messaging; communications should also direct Members to the MPA website for registration.
- (k) **Protect privacy.** MPA Custodian(s) should always think twice before sharing content including photographs and remember that what is shared may remain in the public domain for a long time afterwards. Make sure to protect the privacy of yourself and others and that of the MPA.
- (l) **Photos.** Photos of people shared on any MPA Social Media must first have (a) approval of the President and (b) the consent of the specific person/people featured in the photograph. Individuals who do not wish to have their photographs shared on MPA Social Media should notify the President. Any person attending an MPA Sponsored CLE or event who does not want their photograph taken and shared on Social Media should notify the President and the Event Coordinator(s).
- (m) **Confidentiality.** Under no circumstances shall any personal information about the MPA or its Members be shared on any MPA Social Media accounts. The names and email addresses of (a) appointed Board Members, (b) appointed Chairs, and (c) elected Officers of the MPA may be shared on Social Media including the MPA Website with prior consent of the President. Posting personal identifiable information without obtaining proper consent on any MPA Social Media platforms is strictly prohibited.

Section 2. Management of Social Media Accounts. The MPA Social Media accounts must only be created and managed by authorized MPA Custodians in accordance with this Policy.

If a Member posts content on any MPA Social Media platform that does not adhere to (a) the MPA Purpose, (b) this Policy or, (c) is otherwise inappropriate, abusive or discriminatory, the MPA Custodian responsible for that Social Media platform has the authority to remove the Member's comments or content and block future comments and content from that Member. Any Member that is blocked (or has had comments or content removed) will be notified via messaging through that particular Social Media platform's messaging system if possible, or otherwise through the Member's email address. The MPA Custodian will also immediately notify the Social Media Director and the President of the action taken.

Section 3. Expectations and Disciplinary Consequences. MPA Custodians are expected to use, manage and oversee the Social Media platforms responsibly to the benefit of the MPA at all times.

The MPA Board may take disciplinary action leading up to and including Membership revocation if a Member posts content on an MPA Social Media platform that does not adhere to (a) the MPA Purpose, (b) this Policy or, (c) is otherwise inappropriate, abusive or discriminatory. Examples of non-conformity with this Policy include but are not limited to:

- (a) Disclosing confidential information;
- (b) Directing offensive comments towards other Members;
- (c) Conducting illegal or criminal activities;

- (d) Sharing updates, images, and messages that may tarnish the MPA's professional and public image;
and
- (e) Distributing spam and chain messages;

Section 4. Creating Social Media Accounts Under the MPA. As the MPA explores the advantages and disadvantages of expanding its social media presence into new networks, Members who see a new opportunity to create a Social Media account on a new platform should provide their ideas to the MPA Board. The Social Media Director and President must approve the creation of all new MPA Social Media accounts.

If possible, the MPA Custodian should use their @massparalegal.org email account as the contact email account for MPA Social Media.

The order of preference when referring to the MPA on Social Media is as follows:

- (a) Massachusetts Paralegal Association
- (b) Mass Paralegal Association
- (c) MA Paralegal Association
- (d) MPA

Section 5. Passwords and Accounts. Maintaining a current list of Social Media accounts and their passwords is critical to ensuring uninterrupted use and access to the accounts by the Organization. As such, the President, Treasurer, and Clerk shall be provided with a document, either in electronic or paper form, listing the username and password for each Social Media account affiliated with the MPA (hereafter known as the "**Social Media Custodian Account Log**") an example of which is referenced in **Appendix A**).

The President, Treasurer, and Clerk shall be updated within 24 hours in the event that a password is changed to any of the Social Media accounts and an updated Social Media Custodian Account Log must be provided to the Clerk. All Social Media Custodian Account Logs shall be stored on the RackSpace Cloud.

In addition to the President, Treasurer, Clerk, the Social Media Director and the MPA Custodian (of that Social Media account) any other Member may be provided with the username and password if needed with the prior consent of the President.

Section 6. Legal Advice. If asked for legal advice through an MPA Social Media platform, the MPA Custodian(s) must respond with the following: "As a professional association for paralegals, we are not permitted to provide legal advice. We recommend that you contact an attorney with your questions. If you do not know of an attorney, you can contact the Massachusetts Bar Association. They have a Lawyer Referral Service which you may find helpful."

Section 7. Job Postings. Social Media is another avenue to promote the MPA's job bank service and generate interest in membership. The MPA Custodian may not share content, or allow content, about specific job openings on MPA Social Media accounts unless the content is linked to the MPA job bank.

Section 8. Transitioning Social Media Accounts. From time to time, it may be necessary to transition responsibility for a Social Media account to a new MPA Custodian. To facilitate this process, a Social Media Transition Checklist (referenced in **Appendix B**) outlines the steps that need to be taken in order to transfer access to the Social Media account to the new MPA Custodian.

ARTICLE II
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Section 1. Acknowledgment. Each MPA Custodian must read and acknowledge the following statement:

I attest that I have read this Social Media Policy in its entirety and understand and acknowledge the content contained therein. As an MPA Custodian I will uphold the standards set forth in this document and the By-laws when accessing, managing, monitoring, and using MPA's Social Media account(s).

Name: _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

A signed copy of this form must be provided to the Clerk for filing in Rackspace Cloud prior to an MPA Custodian taking responsibility for an MPA Social Media account.

Disclaimer: This Policy is meant to provide general guidelines and should be used a reference. This Policy is not a legal document and does not take into account relevant local, state, or federal laws.

APPENDIX A - Social Media Custodian Account Log

Date Update: 24 February 2021

LinkedIn – “The Massachusetts Paralegal Association”
https://www.linkedin.com/company/massachusetts-paralegal-association-inc/about
MPA Custodian(s): (1)
Managing Instructions:
Facebook – “Massachusetts Paralegal Association”
https://www.facebook.com/massparalegal.org
MPA Custodian: (1)
Managing Instructions: The Facebook account is managed and linked to a dummy FB account. The account is linked to the Social Media Director MPA email account. The dummy FB account has the administrative privileges to give managing rights to other Members. For example, the dummy account has given Shoshana managing rights to the page.
Instagram – “@MassParalegal”
https://www.instagram.com/massparalegal/
MPA Custodian: (1)
Managing Instructions: The email associated to this account is <i>social.media@massparalegal.org</i> . Administrator(s) should utilize Instagram stories (Stories only last 24 hours and should be used as a quick way to interact with followers, especially for events – They go to the top of followers Instagram feeds).
Twitter – “@MassParalegal”
https://twitter.com/massparalegal
MPA Custodian: (1)
Managing Instructions: The account was created using the <i>membership@massparalegal.org</i> email address.

Account Information				
Platform	Email	Username	Password	Notes
LinkedIn	N/A			
Facebook	social.media@massparalegal.org			
Instagram	social.media@massparalegal.org			
Twitter				

APPENDIX B - Social Media Transition Checklist

Social Media Transition Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure you have ALL login information, all passwords and usernames
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the MPA Custodian violated this Policy or any MPA Policy, the account's password MUST be changed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update the Social Media Custodian Account Log and provide the updated document to the President, Treasurer and Clerk to add to the Rackspace Cloud
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure all emails used for password recovery or account access are linked to someone who is on the MPA Board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clearly outline the expectations and goals to the new MPA Custodian
<input type="checkbox"/>	The social media content calendar is one of the key documents. Make sure this is introduced to any new MPA Custodian as quickly as possible to maintain consistency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduction and training: A discussion should occur between the new MPA Custodian the Social Media Director that illustrates what is working with regards to content ideas and what is not working.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify the President, Treasurer, and Clerk within 24 hours in the event that a password is changed