



Social Media Policy

(3-19-2024 reviewed by Standards Team; 3-26-2024 approved by UWM Board of Trustees)

1.0 Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to support Unity leaders and ministries to engage in positive public discourse.

2.0 Persons Affected: This policy applies to:

2.1 UWM Member Ministries

2.2 Licensed and ordained ministers, licensed Unity teachers and candidates, spiritual leaders, ministry coordinators, Special Dispensation participants, and those serving in leadership positions in Unity ministries without Unity credentials.

3.0 Policy:

We aspire to honor the inherent worth of all, and endeavor to participate in all public discourse in respectful, compassionate, and dignified ways, refraining from making disparaging public remarks particularly when we are expressing disagreement. Subject to applicable law, online or other public activities that violate Unity standards for ethical behavior may subject a minister or leader to disciplinary action.

We commit to direct and compassionate communication. Any concerns we have about the organization (the organization being but not limited to UWM, UWH, Unity (generic), the region, the ministry, the minister, the spiritual leader, the LUT, the board, etc.) shall be addressed in a private format.

Specifically, we agree to:

a. Refrain from posting social media content and images that may be considered defamatory, pornographic, harassing, libelous, racist, sexist, or may create a hostile work environment.

b. Be aware and assume that our position and title give the impression that we speak for Unity, Unity Worldwide Ministries, or a local Unity center or ministry. We may not make social media posts on behalf of a Unity organization unless we have authorization from the leadership of that center, ministry, or organization.

c. In addition, follow ethical standards set by Unity Worldwide Ministries when making public posts initiated from any and all personal accounts. What we say in tweets, blogs, etc. reflects on our Unity Member Ministries and Communities and the organization as a whole.

d. Refrain from sharing information considered to be confidential. If unsure, do not share.

e. Obtain appropriate permission to use Unity or third-party copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, images, service marks, or other intellectual property.

f. Get appropriate permission before live streaming, video filming, posting, or sharing images of children, youth, or teens. (See additional documents: Social Media Policy Template for a ministry <https://www.unityuwm.org/sacred-safety-background-checks-and-resources> and Youth Registration forms in the UWM YFM Guidebook <https://www.unityuwm.org/resources-starting-or-enhancing-youth-and-family-ministry> .)

g. Recognize that social media networks, blogs, and other types of online content may generate press and media attention. Refer all media inquiries to the organization's leadership.

4.0 Definitions:

4.1 **Social Media** refers to interactions among people in which they create, share, and/or exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. Social Media means a service, platform, or website where users communicate with one another and share media, such as pictures, videos, music, and blogs, with other users free of charge.

4.2 **Unity Minister** refers to individuals who are licensed and/or ordained by UWM.

4.3 **Member Ministry** refers to a Unity ministry that has been approved for membership in UWM.

4.4 **A Licensed Unity Teacher (LUT)** is an individual who is trained and credentialed through UWM to teach Unity principles and serve under the leadership of a Unity minister.

4.5 **A Spiritual Leader** is an individual who is not a Unity minister and has a special dispensation to lead a member ministry on a temporary and conditional basis.

4.6 **A Ministry Coordinator** is an individual without Unity credentials who has special dispensation to coordinate the activities of a member ministry on a temporary and conditional basis.

4.7 **Organization** refers to UWM, UWH, Unity (generic), the region, the ministry, the minister, the spiritual leader, the LUT, the board, etc.

4.8 **Special Dispensation** refers to authorization for a ministry to employ an individual who is not a Unity minister to lead the ministry. This authorization is contingent upon the ministry and the individual entering into an agreement with UWM for the individual to commit to a path to Unity ordination and to follow through on that commitment.