TITLE/NAME OF POLICY: Electronic Communications Policies

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POLICY:

Introduction

Electronic communications allow for effective communications between people without barriers of time or geography. Electronic communications technologies include email, voice over internet, blogs and other forms of social networking. Zonta International encourages the use of electronic communications.

Such enabling technologies stimulate the exchange of ideas, build fellowship and provide new avenues for recruiting and fundraising for an international organization.

Zonta International has existing policies concerning communications among Zontians and between Zontians and the general public. Electronic Communications Policies include the following:

- Networking Policies and Guidelines
- Email Policy
- Blogging and Social Networking Policy
- Policy for Zonta Club and District Websites

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Networking Policy and Guidelines

Networking within Zonta International is a benefit of membership. The mission of the organization, "Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide", is a shared commitment among all Zonta members. Shared friendships and fellowship, professional interests and business relationships, especially across national borders, enhances a member's total Zonta experience. Networking facilitates these activities.

Zontians are encouraged to network for:

- Zonta purposes
    - Networking provides information on activities in other clubs/areas/districts/countries. It helps us find members with expertise in different fields, and it provides a means to raise funds in local, national and internationals communities.

- Personal purposes
    - Networking increases our ability to initiate or maintain personal friendships with Zontians in other areas of our countries or the world. It increases our understanding of world affairs, broadens our views, and increases our tolerance for the views of others.

- Professional purposes
    - Networking increases our knowledge in our respective fields of work and the understanding of how this work is conducted in other countries. It helps us to become more knowledgeable professionals with wider viewpoints and more prepared to contribute productively to the development of our societies.

- Business purposes
    - Networking provides knowledge about national and international business trends and ideas on business management. It provides opportunities to find new business relationships.

Networking is increasingly accomplished by means of electronic communication. Members are encouraged to take advantage of these networking opportunities, ensuring that the networking they participate in is positive, productive communications and not a mechanism for lobbying or harmful gossip.

Networking by Zonta members must not violate the circularization policy contained in the Rules of Procedure of Zonta International, Circularization (Rule 3).

Networking must not be used for the purposes of campaigning for a candidate, a bylaws proposal, or a change to the Rules of Procedure.

Networking must not but used to solicit business by initiating contact with other Zontians, but it is permissible for Zontians to initiate contact with other Zontians who provide products or services.

Email Policy

Zonta International will make full use of all electronic communications mechanisms, including email, to streamline operations, using the same discretion and professionalism that governs all other communications within Zonta International.

Email addresses will be used in accordance with the Zonta International Rules of Procedure, Circularization (Rule 3).

Email will be used as a positive and productive communications tool and not as a mechanism for lobbying or harmful gossip.

Blogging and Social Networking Policy

Blogs
A blog is a form of website or an attachment to a website containing commentary, links to other blogs or websites, descriptions of events or material such as graphics or video. Some blogs are open to the public while other blogs give access only to blog members through a password. Blogs offer readers an opportunity to leave responses, opinions or comments which may or may not be screened by a moderator.

Zonta International encourages the use of blogs to provide communication to the public and to foster open discussion and communication among members.

Zontians must ensure that blogs, authored by clubs, districts and committees or those linked to Zonta websites at all levels:

- Are moderated to ensure inaccurate or inappropriate information is not posted to the blog.

- Do not include links to websites or other blogs which are not consistent with Zonta's objects or mission.

- Do not include inaccurate impressions of our organization, and must make clear that personal opinions and impressions do not represent official policy of Zonta International.

- Are consistent with Rules of Procedure of Zonta International, Circularization (Rule 3).

It is recommended that membership-only blogs are used for communication among Zontians.

Personal blogs which provide forum for individuals to give their opinions on any subject they choose should not link to any Zonta club, district or committee website or the Zonta International website.

Social Networking
Social networking is defined as a social structure made of individuals or organizations which are linked by one or more specific types of interdependency, such as friendship, knowledge or interests. Some of the social media outlets that allow social networking over the internet include Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and MySpace.

Zontians are encouraged to join the official Zonta groups on the various social media sites to provide communication to the public and to foster open discussion and communication among members.

Positive postings by Zontians about our organization on social networks can create a greater awareness of Zonta International and Zonta clubs, and encourage membership growth and donations.

Zontians must ensure that their participation in social media sites:
- Does not include inaccurate impressions of our organization, and must make clear that personal opinions and impressions do not represent official policy of Zonta International.

- Are consistent with Rules of Procedure of Zonta International, Circularization (Rule 3).

Policy for Zonta Club and District Websites

Zonta websites, which represent clubs, districts and Zonta International, are very powerful public relations, recruiting and fundraising tools. They must appear professional and be updated on a regular basis, and provide accurate information to our members, our potential members, potential donors and others interested in Zonta.

Basic Requirements for Developing a Website

1. Zonta clubs and districts must obtain web space on which to build a website and a domain name which clearly identifies the website.

2. In order to obtain web space or "hosting", clubs and districts must find a web host. The web host "rents" a portion of a web server to the clubs or district each year. Hosting can be bought from a web hosting company. It is recommended that clubs and districts compare costs, space dimensions and other features offered by the hosting company before selecting the host.

3. The domain name of Zonta clubs and districts should be consistent so members and potential members can easily find the clubs or district. Domain names for districts should be (example) www.zontadistrict12.org, and domain names for clubs should be (example) www.zontalongbeach.org. Domain names can be bought from hosting companies and can be purchased for one year or more up to five years.

4. Clubs and districts whose domain names are not consistent with the example should consider buying a replacement domain when their current domain name expires. Your webmaster can redirect the new domain name to your existing website.

Contents of a Clubs Website

1. The following pages are recommended for inclusion in Zonta clubs' websites

    a. Home page which gives basic information about Zonta, the club and its location.

    b. Club Activities page which describes the activities clubs hold to raise money for their service projects.

    c. Service Projects page which describes the organizations/causes to which the service funds go.

    d. Special Events page, where the club features one of its major projects and includes photos.

    e. Club Calendar page, which lists times, dates, location and details of club meetings, board meetings and other events.

  f. Club Newsletter page which features the current issue of the Clubs newsletter.

  g. District News page which talks about the highlights of the District and links to the District website

  h. International page which gives information about the current International President, the service and ZISVAW projects, the International Fellowship and Awards programs, other International news, and a link to the International website.

  i. Membership page which describes the requirements of becoming a member of a Zonta club.

  j. Contacts Page which lists the club board and committee chairs, and a general club email. "Aliases" or hidden emails can be used to reach the various board members and committee chairs without exposing individual email addresses.

2. Other pages which can be part of the club's website include:

  a. Club History page which outlines the club's development and history.

  b. Scholarships page which gives information and scholarship application links to the club's scholarships.

  c. Officers page which lists the Club officers and their "alias" emails (in this instance, the Contacts page would just list the club's email and perhaps a phone number).

  d. Club Reference page which includes various forms, applications and information useful to club members.

  e. Fundraising page which talks about the different types of giving offered by the International Foundation and links to the International Foundation page. Club Foundation information, if applicable, can also be describe here or on a separate Club Fundraising page.

  f. Members -Only page which is password protected and contains things like club roster.

Contents of a District Website

1. District websites can contain many of the same types of pages as the club website. Some specific pages a district website might include are:

   a. District Clubs page which lists the clubs in the district, links to club websites, and can provide information on club presidents, meeting times and locations and an email for reaching the club.

   b. District Newsletter page which includes the current version of the District Newsletter.

   c. District Resources page which includes forms, policies, manuals and other information for use by the clubs.

   d. District Conference page which gives the details about the District Conference(s).

   e. International Convention page which provides information about the next International Convention.

   f. Governors Corner which the Governor uses to provide messages and other information to district Zontians.

   g. Club Presidents page which lists the club presidents (if that information is not included in the District Club page).

   h. District Board page which gives names and contact information for each board member.

   i. District Chairman Page which gives names and contact information for each District Chairman.

Other Website Guidelines

1. Club and district websites must be updated at least once a month.

2. Club and district websites must contain accurate information, proper spelling and grammar, and have clear graphics and photographs.

3. Club and district websites must never contain inappropriate or unprofessional material or images.

4. Clubs and districts are encouraged to use the Zonta logos available on the Zonta International website. The Logo consists of the Zonta emblem, the actual square which holds the "Z", and any lettering that may go above or below.   Logos may be adapted slightly to conform to the design of the website. However, the Zonta emblem must not be changed.

5. Each club and district must have a specific email address, which does not change from biennium to biennium,   such as info@zontafairfax.org or contact@zontadistrict4.org; and must provide that email address to the Zonta International webmaster at webmaster@zonta.org .

6. Each club and district must provide a link to their website to the Zonta International webmaster so that their website can be included in the club locator on the Zonta International website.

7. Clubs and districts are encouraged to provide their website information to search engines, such as Google, so that their sites may be more easily found by those searching for a Zonta club or district.

8. Clubs and districts should appoint a webmaster if they have a member who can design and maintain their website, or a website coordinator, who provides information to an outside web designer who builds and maintains the site for the club or district based upon the information provided by the club.   The webmaster must obtain, and the web coordinator must provide up-to-date information to keep the website current.

9. Password-protected materials should be kept to a minimum to show maximum transparency and information to those who are interested in joining a Zonta club or district.

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