

Greater Las Vegas Association of REALTORS®
Las Vegas REALTORS®
POLICY 500-15

SUBJECT: GLVAR Social Media Policy

SOURCE: Board of Directors

This policy governs the publication of original messages and commentary on others' messages via social media by GLVAR Members. "Social media" is defined as any website, webpage, chat, blog, text, application or other electronic means of communication that allows users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. A non-exhaustive list of examples of social media sources include, but are not limited to Wikis, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr, YouTube, Nextdoor, etc.

As a GLVAR Member, you are responsible for establishing and supporting GLVAR public and governing policies in furtherance of GLVAR's mission. Therefore, you will avoid making any public statements – on social media or otherwise- that are contrary to achieving GLVAR objectives or that may reflect badly upon GLVAR's reputation.

Posts on social media can help GLVAR expand its reach and increase its impact by:

- helping to raise awareness about the mission and work of GLVAR and its committees,
- building a sense of community among the Association,
- helping to improve the knowledge or skills of REALTORS®,
- providing a virtual means to engage GLVAR,
- showcase community involvement, outreach, volunteerism to the public, and more.

Social media is an effective communications tool but sometimes it can be challenging for members to reconcile their public and private social media activities in terms of their role as a GLVAR Member. Social media is designed for self-expression and encourages conversations. This policy and accompanying guidelines provide a framework for appointees to engage in these activities effectively and ethically.

Statement of Policy

Permission: While serving as a Member of GLVAR, Members are both granted permission to and are encouraged to use social media as a conduit for informing the community about projects, initiatives, involvement and work of GLVAR. This needs to occur in a professional and ethical manner.

GLVAR Policy Compliance: GLVAR Members must also comply with relevant GLVAR policies and guidelines, including those that relate to GLVAR elections and campaigning. In addition, GLVAR's non-solicitation and no recruitment policies apply to any and all social media comments.

Federal Law Compliance: In order to protect the 501(c)6 status of GLVAR, there are topics that Association Members are not permitted to publish via any an official GLVAR communication tool, including social media (e.g. GLVAR's Facebook page). When posting on any GLVAR resource, individuals cannot call for a boycott of a product or company. In addition, individuals posting via an official Association communication tool may not endorse or oppose any federal, state or local candidate running for political office.

Anti-Trust: Members are not permitted to publish via any official GLVAR communication tool, including social media any comment that may be considered a violation of Federal Anti-Trust law including but not limited to boycotts, price fixing or any related behavior.

Campaigning: Candidates are cautioned that any and all campaign activities, including the use of social media, is governed by Article 15 of the Code of Ethics which states "that REALTORS® will not knowingly or recklessly make false or misleading statements about other real estate professionals, their businesses, or their business practices." NAR has expanded Article 15 to cover **all of a Member's activities**, and no longer limits its scope to only those involving real estate transactions. Alleged violations of this requirement will be investigated by the Election Committee. Violations of GLVAR's Social Media Policy may result in the candidate's removal from the approved list of candidates and other possible disciplinary action GLVAR deems appropriate in accordance with GLVAR Bylaws and Policies and local, state and federal law. Removal from the approved list of candidates will be made by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors upon recommendation from the Election Committee.

Defamatory Speech, Hate Speech, and Personal Insults: Posting of defamatory and/or offensive material or use of inappropriate speech is strictly prohibited including, but not, limited to harassing speech, hate-speech, name-calling, personal insults, epithets, or slurs based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other trait or characteristic protected under federal, Nevada or local law.

Copyright: All postings must be free of copyright restrictions that limit distribution. For example, posting a significant amount of a copyrighted work verbatim requires the permission of the copyright holder. To verify that such permission was obtained, all postings of this nature must include a statement that this is the case.

Confidentiality:

- Using social media to communicate about GLVAR Executive Team meetings, Board meetings, and committees prior, during or after closed meetings, discussions, or votes is not permitted.
- Personal opinions about other committee appointees, specific Executive Team, Board meetings, and committee decisions, etc. are not appropriate to share via social media.
- Always ask for permission from the President and CEO before identifying a member, partner, or sponsor and never discuss confidential details of any individual's or organization's engagement in GLVAR.

GLVAR Name & Logo: Use of GLVAR's name and logo must follow existing policy.

Following the Policy

It is best to err on the side of caution. If a member is unsure whether or not something is appropriate to post on social media, he or she should contact their Committee Chair before making the post "LIVE". A Chair who is unsure about policy compliance should contact his or her staff Liaison. If a member, for whatever reason, takes an action that is in conflict with this policy, he or she will be contacted to resolve the situation and may be asked to withdraw, correct, or revise postings. If the post is determined to be egregious, or intentionally hurtful, the individual may be asked to resign from his or her position by the GLVAR President.

Guidelines

For Every Appointee Logistics

- All official GLVAR social media accounts including so called "closed or private groups" must have permission to act as such from the CEO. Administrative rights to all such groups must be held by GLVAR and not individual members.
- GLVAR believes in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, identify what capacity you serve in GLVAR and do not post anonymously, use pseudonyms or use false screen names.
- Use tags when posting GLVAR content (e.g. #GLVAR or @REALTOR®) to help ensure your message reaches its targeted audience.
- Post frequently and respond to comments and replies from others quickly and accurately.
- Know and respect your audience at all times, including and its members.
- Be smart and protect your privacy by taking simple steps such as avoiding posting personal details, like phone numbers, reading web sites' privacy policies, making use of privacy settings on social media sites, etc.
- Avoid social media arguments and debates and screenshot the issue/complaint and send to: socialmedia@glvar.org if you see a misrepresentation made about GLVAR in social media. If you, yourself, are accused by anyone of posting something improperly, inform the CEO of the situation promptly, in order to determine best next steps and to quickly resolve the situation.

Content

- Regardless of what account you use for posting as a committee appointee, be sure to limit your committee-related posts to sharing information about the work of the committee, news and announcements from the committee, etc. if applicable. The committee chair will handle the official communication for the group, but committee members are sometimes called on to write articles, blogs and Twitter posts.
- Before posting, ask yourself if the post will:
 - improve knowledge or skills of GLVAR members
 - if it contributes directly or indirectly to the improvement of GLVAR
 - if it builds a sense of community or it helps to promote GLVAR's mission
 - If the answer to all of these standards is yes, post the content. If it's no, then don't post it.
- Write about what you know (always verify any facts, dates, etc. before posting anything).

- What you publish will be around indefinitely, so consider the content carefully. Strive to make sure it is accurate and professional.
- It is good, general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it. Adhere to the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including NAR and GLVAR's own trademarks, copyrights and brands. Review the share carefully to ensure the previous postee has met the letter of the law. If they have not, and you share the post, you could be liable.
- Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that any views expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of GLVAR.
- Bring out your own personality and share your thoughts in a respectful and professional tone.

For Chairs/Volunteer Leaders

Committee chairs, vice chairs and volunteer leaders need to act as conduits between committee members and their GLVAR staff liaison if questions arise about social networking activities of committee members.

Disciplinary Action

GLVAR members understand that as a condition to holding a leadership or committee position with the Association, that they agree to fully abide by GLVAR's Social Media Policy. Any inquiries or concerns, whether or not specifically addressed in the Social Media Policy, should be addressed to the Association CEO.

Possible violations of GLVAR's Social Media Policy should be reported to the Association CEO for review. GLVAR members who do not adhere to this Social Media Policy or who otherwise act inappropriately when engaging in social media, may be contacted by the President of the Board of Directors or the CEO to resolve the situation, which may include withdrawing, correcting, or revising the communication at issue. GLVAR reserves the right to take further action as it deems appropriate, including possible removal from leadership positions and any other discipline GLVAR deems appropriate in accordance with GLVAR Bylaws and Policies and local, state and federal law.

Creating, disseminating, and maintaining content on social media platforms

1. **Definition of "identification":** Whenever identification is required by this policy will include the following:
 - a. Name/Logo of brokerage
 - b. Name of broker
 - c. Address of the brokerage office with which the agent is affiliated
 - d. Phone/Fax/E-mail of the brokerage office
 - e. Name of the agent responsible for the web site
 - f. State of licensure

2. Blogging

a. The Member is responsible for compliance with all laws and regulations governing real estate business including fair housing, antitrust and real estate license laws and regulations. Real estate blogs will provide the identification of the responsible Member.

b. The Member will include “terms of use” to include:

i. Users will abide by any legal requirements related to the use of the blog and the site’s terms of use for the blog including specifically its privacy policy.

ii. Users will be responsible for their conduct on site.

iii. Obtain clear authority from Users to utilize anything the User includes on the site.

iv. Prohibit the unauthorized use of third party content or the posting of any unlawful or objectionable materials.

v. Prohibit the use of the site to harass or stalk anyone.

vi. Prohibiting the posting of content which infringes on the rights of any third party.

vii. Prohibit the posting of content which expresses a preference based upon an individual’s membership in a protected class.

viii. Provide a take-down policy in the event any such materials are posted to the site.

ix. Disclaim responsibility for any third party sites linked to through the site.

x. Generally disclaim and limit any liability arising from the content of the site whether provided by Agent or a User.

xi. Provide a privacy policy consistent with that used by the brokerage.

c. Identification

i. Members will identify themselves when establishing a blog in such a way that Users of the blog will know the Member’s name, their status as a real estate licensee and the name of the brokerage with which they are affiliated.

ii. In any posting related to the brokerage, the Member must assure that the Member’s relationship to the brokerage is clear so as to avoid violation of the FTC rules.

iii. Members may not participate in the blog of another party without disclosing their identity and the brokerage with which they are affiliated.

d. Responsibility for Maintenance

i. All blogging must be monitored by the Member for false / defamatory / demeaning / degrading comments at least once per month.

- ii. The Member is responsible for removing or clarifying any comment if the Member knows that it is false or misleading.
- e. The Member is responsible for assuring that the content and operation of the blog conform to the standards established in the Code of Ethics.

3. Posting of Professional Contacts/Qualifications (e.g., LinkedIn)

- a. Member is responsible for assuring that any listing of qualifications, credentials or training contained on the site is current, accurate and not misleading. Any changes to the foregoing will be promptly revised on the site.
- b. Member will not falsely claim association with any person or group.
- c. Notwithstanding any provision herein, Member remains responsible for complying with the license laws and regulations governing the conduct of licensees and all applicable local, state and federal laws.
- d. Member is responsible for assuring that the content conforms to the standards established in the Code of Ethics.

4. Posting of comments to social media pages of others

- a. Any statement regarding the brokerage must clearly disclose the Member's relationship to the brokerage.
- b. The Member must disclose his/her status as a real estate professional as a part of any real estate related statement.
- c. The Member is responsible for assuring that the use of the site is consistent with the Code of Ethics, local, state and federal laws and all applicable real estate license laws and regulations, including where necessary identifying the Member.