

RNZ Social Media Policy 2024

Introduction and principles

Social media is an integral part of how we do our jobs, whether for newsgathering, connection with the audience or promoting our work. However, its use can also pose a risk to the individual and RNZ as an organisation that views impartiality, independence, integrity and audience trust as paramount.

RNZ recognises the importance of freedom of expression but that must not compromise its values or the way it is perceived. In a polarised world, impartiality is vital, alongside the need to represent a variety of views, and demonstrate fairness, accuracy, and balance.

In short, all social media activity needs to be undertaken with the understanding you are a representative of RNZ and will therefore behave in a way that does not undermine your, or the company's, reputation.

'Think before you post' – if you would not say it on live radio or in online stories, reconsider whether it is appropriate for social media.

If ever in doubt – refer up to your manager.

Be aware that disclaimers on individual accounts like 'all opinions expressed here are my own and not those of my employer' are not enough to be exempted from these guidelines.

The same applies for identification on personal accounts; not officially identifying yourself as an employee of RNZ does not negate you from the company's editorial policies and social media guidance. Nothing posted on social media can ever really be viewed as 'private' and, regardless of individuals' privacy settings, should be approached as such.

Personal social media is not RNZ content and RNZ does not take editorial responsibility

for it. It is, however, subject to the following rules and guidance, which should be read in conjunction with the following policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- [Editorial Policy](#)
- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest

Who the guidelines cover

Everyone who works at RNZ must ensure their actions online do not compromise its reputation or integrity. As an independent public media organisation, RNZ strives to set the highest standards of impartiality, independence and civility in debate, whether in person or online.

News, current affairs and content creators, factual journalism production, those with an audience facing role, or acting in such a role, have a particular responsibility to ensure their use of social media does not compromise the perception of or undermine the impartiality, independence and/or reputation of RNZ.

Dos and Don'ts:

- Do not express any support for any political party or reveal how you vote.
- Do not offer your view on any matter of political debate, or any other matter provoking heightened debate or controversy. Think about how any posts might age and how they might be received in the future.
- Do not comment on matters beyond your expertise or area of specialisation.
- Do not mix the professional and the personal in a way that risks bringing RNZ into disrepute.
- Do not support campaigns, regardless of their merit or the strength of your personal feeling about them.
- Do not sacrifice accuracy, quality or tone for speed – once posted it is out there and you and RNZ may then have to deal with the consequences.
- Think about actions beyond straight posting, think about what your likes, shares, reposts, use of hashtags and who you follow say about you, your personal prejudices and opinions.
- Do not disclose confidential information obtained through work.
- Do not post or share RNZ content on personal social media before it has been published or distributed by RNZ.

Everyone working for, or contracted to, RNZ is expected to set the example for respectful behaviour online and in civil public discourse: behaving professionally, always treating others with respect and courtesy and not getting involved in emotionally charged or overly personal debates.

Best practice:

- Treat others with respect, even in the face of abuse.
- Do not use offensive, insulting or aggressive language.
- Take particular care when commenting on the issues that provoke the greatest debate.
- Do not attack individuals, even when you disagree with their views.
- Don't criticise your colleagues in public.
- Respect the privacy of the workplace and the confidentiality of internal

announcements.

- Don't promote law breaking.
- If you know you've got something wrong, correct it quickly and openly, generally by linking or referring to the original post rather than deleting it.
- Do not post when your judgement may be impaired.
- Never use your RNZ status to seek personal gain, financial or otherwise.

It is important to note RNZ does not require or encourage employees to be active on personal social media accounts as part of their employment. RNZ does not endorse the content of any personal social media by anyone associated with RNZ.

Enforcement

Breach of this guidance may lead to disciplinary action for employees in line with standard disciplinary procedures; this could include possible termination of employment in serious circumstances.

For contract freelancers/presenters found to have breached the guidance, there may be consequences including non-renewal or termination of contract.