

## Social Media Policy

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### Revision History

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## Social Media Policy

### 1. Introduction

Human Appeal is an incorporated global charity working across the globe to strengthen humanity's fight against poverty, social injustice and natural disaster, through the provision of immediate relief and establishment of self-sustaining development programmes. Our vision is to contribute to a just, caring and sustainable world, free of poverty. Human Appeal does this by raising money to fund immediate and long-term sustainable solutions, and empower local communities.

### 2. Policy statement

2.1 Human Appeal believes social media can bring significant benefits. Through social media, Human Appeal aims to promote campaigns, share news and updates with audiences, engage in important conversations with stakeholders, celebrate successes, raise awareness of important issues and challenges, advertise job and volunteering opportunities, support fundraising activities, increase donations, build an online supportive community, build relationships with current and potential employees, volunteers, donors, partners, the media, and other stakeholders, raise the public profile and strengthen the charity's reputation, and react to quickly changing situations and topics.

2.2 Social media is an excellent way for employees to make useful connections, share ideas and shape discussions; therefore, Human Appeal encourages employees to use social media to support its aims and objectives. However, it is important that employees who use the charity's social media accounts and / or their own personal social media accounts do so in a way that enhances the charity's prospects without compromising its integrity. This Social Media Policy describes the rules governing use of social media at Human Appeal.

We aim:

- To encourage best practice;
- To protect Human Appeal and your reputation as an employee of the charity;
- To protect those we may engage with via social media;
- To protect and strengthen the reputation and brand values of Human Appeal;
- To clarify where and how existing policies and procedures apply to social media;
- To promote effective and innovative use of social media as part of the charity's activities and to highlight those areas where conflict may arise.

### 3. Policy objective

3.1 We aim to provide a framework for using social media and set out practical advice to avoid issues that might arise by careless or inappropriate use of social media in the workplace. It also explains the rules around using personal social media accounts at work and describes what staff may and may not say about the charity and in general on their personal accounts.

3.2 To make the most of the opportunities presented by social media, it is important that staff understand what is acceptable, when activity is public or private, and how to protect themselves against unintended consequences.

## 4. Definition of terms

**4.1 Social Media** – refers collective term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create, share and interact with content (words, images, graphics and video content), as well as network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media platforms include Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, Twitch and TikTok. This policy covers them all.

**4.2 Employees, contractors and volunteers working on behalf of Human Appeal** - will be referred to as **staff** in this policy.

## 5. Scope

This policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including trustees, directors, senior managers, officers, co-ordinators, employees, consultants, freelancers, contractors, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy) working on behalf of Human Appeal. It is to be considered for both business and personal purposes, whether during office hours or otherwise. It also applies when social media is accessed using Human Appeal's IT facilities, or equipment belonging to members of staff.

This policy also applies to online blogs, wikis, podcasts, forums, and messaging based apps, such as WhatsApp. Social media can be accessed in various ways, including from a desktop or laptop computer, tablet or smartphone. This policy applies to the use of all such devices.

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

**6.1** Everyone who operates a charity social media account or who uses their personal social media accounts at work or in their own personal time is responsible for implementing this policy. However, the following people have key responsibilities:

**6.2 Associate Director of Communications (Digital) / Head of Digital Marketing** is ultimately responsible for ensuring all Human Appeal staff members are using social media safely, appropriately and in line with the charity's objectives and this policy. In addition, they are responsible for providing apps and tools to manage the charity's social media presence and track any key performance indicators. They are also jointly responsible for proactively monitoring for social media security threats in conjunction with the Systems & Development Team, and to work with the Social Media Co-ordinator, Programmes Department, Communications Department and the Community Fundraising Department to roll out marketing ideas, campaigns and initiatives through our social media channels in accordance with this policy.

**6.3 Social Media Co-ordinator** is responsible for building online communities through the charity's social media profiles, reputation management and analysis, and ensuring requests for assistance and support made via social media are followed up in a timely manner, in accordance with this policy.

**6.4 Trustees and Directors** are responsible for ensuring that the standards of compliance outlined in this policy are implemented effectively within their respective areas. They are expected to support and uphold

the policy, acting as escalation points for significant or recurring breaches. Additionally, they must oversee and allocate resources for necessary activities, balancing these with other business priorities.

6.5 **Managers** are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy by making sure that all staff members understand and adhere to the expected standards of behaviour. They must take appropriate action when these standards are not met, act as a point of escalation for major or sustained breaches of the policy, and ensure these are reported immediately to the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) / Head of Digital Marketing. Additionally, managers should provide thorough guidance on the policy during induction periods and support the document owner in regular reviews by offering feedback and ensuring the policy remains up-to-date.

6.6 It is the responsibility of all staff members to read and act in accordance with the principles of this policy and its guidelines. Report any breach, incident or vulnerabilities immediately to the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) / Head of Digital Marketing.

## 7. Policy provisions

Regardless of what social networks staff are using, whether they are using Human Appeal's official business accounts or their personal accounts in charity time or in their personal time, all staff members should follow governance rules and apply expected behaviours to avoid common pitfalls.

## 8. Representing Human Appeal

8.1 Staff members who represent our organisation by handling social media accounts or speaking on behalf of Human Appeal must act carefully and responsibly to protect our image and reputation. All staff members are responsible for the way they conduct themselves online and it is important they are aware that posting information on social networking sites in a personal capacity cannot be entirely isolated from their working life. Human Appeal recognises an individual's right to a private life and understands that social networking sites are a way for people to maintain contact with friends and family. How much information you share about yourself is very much a personal decision but working for Human Appeal brings with it responsibility. All staff are accountable for any information placed in the public domain, even if it is on a privately held account. As an employee of Human Appeal you are expected to conduct yourself appropriately during working hours and outside working hours, and should always consider the consequences of sharing information with others.

8.2 You have a duty to ensure that inappropriate use of information through social media sites and internet messaging services does not jeopardise:

- The safety of any staff;
- The organisation's reputation or public confidence;
- The confidentiality of any assets retained by the organisation.

8.3 Therefore, to ensure that personal social media accounts do not compromise your professional position, we advise on the following. All Human Appeal staff are required to ensure that they **do not**:

### 8.3.1 Promote content that is:

- Is islamophobia, racist, sexist, or promotes religious intolerance.
- Contains abusive, obscene, or offensive language, or links to such material.
- Includes abusive language or violence towards individuals or organisations.
- Uses swear words or other forms of profanity.
- Promotes gambling, drug use, terrorism, or cults.
- Is libellous, misleading, or contains inaccurate accusations.

- Is spam, including repetitive promotions or self-promotion.
- Is irrelevant to the topic of conversation or designed to cause disruption.
- Aims to create a nuisance to the page administrator or other users.
- Encourages criminal skills or terrorism, or materials relating to cults.

- 8.3.2 Discuss or post information about colleagues, competitors, donors, beneficiaries, partners, authorities, suppliers or other stakeholders without their approval. Sensitive personal data must be kept safe and secure at all times. This must not be shared unless explicit permission has been sought.
- 8.3.3 Be mindful that all comments must abide by the standards outlined in the charity's GDPR, Equality and Diversity Policy, Dignity and Respect Policy and our Global Code of Conduct.
- 8.3.4 Conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to Human Appeal;
- 8.3.5 Participate in any interaction, which would damage working relationships between Human Appeal staff, donors, partners, members of the public, or other stakeholders;
- 8.3.6 Make offensive comments about the services provided by Human Appeal including Human Appeal staff, donors, partners, agencies, members of the public, or other stakeholders;
- 8.3.7 Make offensive comments of a discriminatory nature about anyone;
- 8.3.8 Share confidential information about Human Appeal, it's staff, donors, partners, agencies, members of the public, or other stakeholders;
- 8.3.9 Discuss private information about others that they have learned through their work;
- 8.3.10 Discuss operational or otherwise sensitive matters on privately held social media sites or internet messaging services;
- 8.3.11 Post or publish any written or pictorial material obtained or gathered during the course of their work without the approval of the Communications Department;
- 8.3.12 Join any group or organisation likely to undermine the integrity or impartiality of Human Appeal.

8.4 Any Human Appeal staff member found to be in breach of the above could be subject to disciplinary proceedings.

- 8.4.1 Whilst there is no intention to restrict any reasonable exercise of your rights and freedoms, it is expected that you will conduct yourself in such a way as to avoid bringing Human Appeal into disrepute or compromising its effectiveness or the security of its operations or assets.
- 8.4.2 Do ensure that you make use of the privacy settings available on social networking sites. However, you must be aware that social networking websites are a public forum and should not assume that entries on any website will remain private.
- 8.4.3 Be extra vigilant, when liking or sharing posts etc., that you have a clear understanding of who has raised the post and it is appropriate for you to offer an opinion.

## 9. Inappropriate content and uses

**Official charity accounts and personal social media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activities that could bring the charity into disrepute.** When sharing an interesting blog post, article or piece of content, staff members should always review the content thoroughly, and should not post a link based solely on a headline.

### 9.1 Inappropriate content includes but is not limited to:

- Pornography
- Racial or religious slurs
- Gender-specific comments
- Violence
- Information encouraging criminal skills or terrorism, or materials relating to cults
- Gambling and illegal drugs.

9.2 Inappropriate content or material also covers any text, images or other media that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

9.2.1 Criticising, disagreeing or arguing with other staff members in a public space online.

9.2.2 Making malicious or false comments about other individuals, organisations or groups.

9.2.3 The examples above are not a definitive list of the misuse of social media, but are examples to illustrate what Human Appeal consider as misuse and malpractice. Staff members are encouraged to talk to their line manager and seek advice if they are unclear.

## 10. Maintaining confidentiality

10.1 Staff members must not share or link to any content or information owned by the charity that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive. This might include details of:

- Key donors
- Stakeholders
- Partners, authorities
- Beneficiaries
- Budgets
- Income
- Expenses
- Admin costs

10.2 Information about future marketing campaigns partnerships or initiatives

10.3 Any content or information owned by another charity or person that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive.

10.4 Share or link to data in any way that could breach the charity's General Data Protection Regulation Policy.

10.5 At any given opportunity staff members must not interact with Human Appeal's competitors in a way which could be interpreted as being offensive, disrespectful or rude. Communication with direct competitors must be professional and kept to a minimum.

## 11. General Online Behavioural Guidelines

These guidelines apply to anyone responsible for moderating or managing official Human Appeal channels, including not only the Social Media Team but also any staff or volunteers granted access to our social media platforms, such as Volunteer Facebook Group moderators.

11.1 The following principles apply to both professional and personal use of social media:

- **Adhere to Policies:** Staff members should comply with Human Appeal's Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, and other organisational policies when using social media.
- **Political Impartiality:** Avoid compromising the charity's political impartiality by not expressing party political views or unsolicited opinions on social, religious, or other non-business-related matters.
- **Content Restrictions:** Do not promote or engage with content that is:
  - Islamophobic, racist, sexist, or promotes religious intolerance.
  - Abusive, obscene, or offensive, including links to such material.
  - Violent or includes abusive language towards individuals or organizations.
  - Profane or uses swear words.

- Related to gambling, drug use, terrorism, or cults.
- Libellous, misleading, or contains inaccurate accusations.
- Encouraging criminal activities or terrorism.
- Spam, repetitive promotions, or irrelevant content.
- Designed to create disruption or nuisance.
- **Inappropriate Content:** This includes any text, images, or media that could reasonably offend someone based on race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic.
- **If Unsure, Do not Post:** If you feel an update or message might cause complaints or offense—or be otherwise unsuitable—do not post it.
- **Be Thoughtful and Polite:** Use the same level of courtesy and professionalism online as you would in face-to-face communications with colleagues, donors, stakeholders, authorities, or partners.
- **Security Awareness:** Be vigilant against social engineering and phishing attempts. Social networks can also be used to distribute spam and malware.
- **Avoid Unverified Promises:** Do not make commitments or promises on behalf of Human Appeal without ensuring that the charity can deliver. The Social Media Coordinator will direct any unresolved inquiries to the Admin & Business Support Officers from the Donor Care Department.
- **Handle Complex Queries Appropriately:** Complex queries and issues should be resolved via appropriate channels, not on social media. Refer all official complaints directly to the Complaints Officer, following the Complaints Process.
- **Do not Escalate:** Think carefully before responding to contentious updates. If in doubt, hold back and consider taking the discussion offline. Formal responses will be handled by the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) or their nominee.
- **Avoid Speaking Outside Your Expertise:** Do not answer questions or make statements about the charity or related topics that fall outside your area of expertise.

## 12. Specific Guidelines for Social Media Management

12.1 The Social Media Team is responsible for setting up and managing Human Appeal's core social media channels. Refer to point 20 for information on unauthorised accounts. Staff outside the Social Media Team wishing to contribute content should consult with the Social Media Team. Paid social media advertising requires sign-off from the Associate Director of Communications (Digital).

12.2 When posting on Human Appeal channels, act as an ambassador for our brand. Ensure your posts reflect our values and follow our brand guidelines for tone of voice.

12.3 Ensure all content has a clear purpose, benefits Human Appeal, and accurately reflects our agreed position.

12.4 Engage with our audience by answering questions, helping, and replying to comments in a timely manner.

12.5 Maintain high standards in content presentation. Check for typos, grammatical errors, and image quality. Follow accessibility guidelines, including camel case in hashtags and providing alt text for images and audio descriptions for videos.

12.6 Pause and consider before posting. If you feel uneasy about something, it is likely unsuitable for publication.

12.7 Do not post about supporters or beneficiaries without ensuring correct consent and permissions through the Global Communications Support Team. Follow data protection requirements.

12.8 Verify the accuracy of information before posting. Avoid assuming material is correct without verification, such as checking data/statistics and being cautious of photo manipulation.



12.9 Admit mistakes honestly. Contact the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) or the Global PR, Research and Advocacy Manager for advice on managing reputational issues.

12.10 If a complaint is made on Human Appeal's social media channels, seek advice from the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) before responding. If they are unavailable, contact the Global PR, Research and Advocacy Manager.

12.11 The Social Media Team monitors mentions of Human Appeal to identify and address potential issues early. For serious situations that could damage the charity's reputation, consult the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) and the Global PR Team for guidance. Staff outside the Social Media Team should report any concerning comments to their line manager.

12.12 Refrain from expressing personal opinions through Human Appeal's social media accounts. If unsure about Human Appeal's position on an issue, consult the Associate Director of Communications (Digital).

12.13 Do not encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others through social media.

12.14 Do not promote illegal activities or use unauthorized video footage. Ensure all necessary rights for material usage are obtained before publication.

12.15 Human Appeal is a non-political organization with no affiliations to political parties. Maintain neutrality and avoid expressing political views.

### 13. Using personal social media accounts at work and in your own personal time

*The following applies to anyone working on behalf of Human Appeal:*

13.1 Human Appeal allow staff members to access their personal accounts at work. However, we expect them to act responsibly and ensure their productivity is not affected. Human Appeal recognises that personal accounts can generate a number of benefits such as; industry contacts can be made that will be useful for the organisation as a whole, and, by posting about Human Appeal, staff can help to build the charity's profile online.

13.2 As a result, the charity is happy for staff members to spend authorised time using their personal social media accounts for development / work purposes only. Line managers must ensure the use of personal social media accounts is kept to a minimum.

We advise staff to:

13.2.1 **Keep personal social media use reasonable:** Although we believe having staff who are active on social media can be valuable to both staff members and to the charity, users should exercise restraint in how much personal use of social media they make during working hours.

13.2.2 **Talking about the charity on your personal social media accounts:** If staff make references to their work on social media (for example, giving opinions on their specialism, updates or the sector in which Human Appeal operates), they should neither claim nor imply that they are speaking on behalf of Human Appeal (unless authorised in writing by their line manager).

13.2.3 **Personal views**

Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Human Appeal. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Human Appeal. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Human Appeal's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "Views are my own" or "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Human



Appeal's positions, policies or opinions."

13.2.4 **Try to add value.** Provide worthwhile information and perspective. Our charity is best represented by the people who work here and care about its core aims and objectives.

13.2.5 **Posting charity content on your personal social media accounts:** Staff members are able to post / share the following official charity content on their personal social media platforms once issued by the Communications Department:

- Marketing campaign / appeal posters and videos
- Event posters e.g. dinners, tours
- Infographics
- Competitions
- News articles / blogs
- Press releases
- Case studies
- Livestreams
- Publications – reports, guides, eBooks and whitepapers e.g. Annual Report, Programme reports / factsheets, Ramadan magazine
- Feedback from our country offices

13.3 Content created by outsourced agencies (e.g. fundraising event posters), content featuring third parties (e.g. Muslim Lifestyle Expo) and livestream content (e.g. livestream content from the field) must be approved by the Communications Department (Digital) before being posted on official and personal social media accounts.

13.4 Protect the Human Appeal brand: Use of the charity's logo or trademarks on your personal social media accounts is prohibited unless permission is granted by the Communications Department.

13.5 With online social networks, the lines between personal and professional use may blur. It is important all employees are aware of their association with Human Appeal online. Where staff have disclosed they work for Human Appeal on their social media platforms or can be identified as an employee through association with other people, they should ensure their profile and related content is consistent with the charity and this policy. We advise all working on behalf of Human Appeal to be mindful of the forum/platforms they participate in and be sure it is consistent with Human Appeals values and Global Code of Conduct.

#### 13.6 Discuss risks and conflicts of interest

Staff and trustees who have a personal blog, social media profile, or website that indicates their affiliation with Human Appeal should discuss any potential risks or conflicts of interest with their line manager and the Social Media Team. Similarly, those who wish to start blogging or create a new social media profile and mention their association with Human Appeal should also consult with their line manager and the Social Media Team to address any potential risks or conflicts of interest.

#### 13.7 Use your common sense and good judgement

Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Human Appeal and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the general public, colleagues, partners, corporates, high profile supporters, customers, policymakers and funders etc.

#### 13.8 Do not approach VIPs directly

Human Appeal works with several high-profile people, including celebrities, journalists, politicians, corporate partners and major donors. Please do not approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by the relevant teams. This includes asking for retweets about the charity.

If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the charity, please speak to the Communications Team (Digital).

### **13.9 Refer press enquiries**

If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Human Appeal, they should talk to the Global PR team immediately and under no circumstances respond directly. Please be aware that their profile may not obviously state that they are a journalist or press publication, if you think they might be then please immediately contact the Global PR team on [press@humanappeal.org.uk](mailto:press@humanappeal.org.uk) for advice.

### **13.10 Keep your political activity separate from the charity**

Human Appeal is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing Human Appeal, staff are expected to hold Human Appeal's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Human Appeal and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

### **13.11 Avoid logos or trademarks**

Never use Human Appeal's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Global Communications Support Team.

### **13.12 Protect your privacy**

Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. We encourage that all staff and volunteers regularly review their privacy settings on the social media platforms so they are aware of who can see their posts. It is important to note that even with robust and extensive security settings; social media is rarely 100% private. Ensure your social media accounts and the equipment you use to access them is password protected.

### **13.13 Protect your personal reputation**

Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions.

### **13.14 Confidential information**

Staff and volunteers should not share or discuss confidential or sensitive Human Appeal information on their social media profiles. It is not acceptable to use social media to criticise or air grievances with Human Appeal or its customers, volunteers, staff or past staff on social media.

13.15 Human Appeal often partner with other organisations – negative discussion about these partnerships will undermine our relationship and reflect poorly on our organisation and should be avoided.

13.16 It is not permitted to include 'Human Appeal' or any other organisational terms in your username (e.g. @JoeBloggsHumanAppeal).

## **14. Human Appeal authorised social media accounts**

### **14.1 Authorised users**

Only employees such as the Associate Director of Communications (Digital), Head of Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Manager, Social Media Co-ordinator and Digital Marketing Assistant have authorisation to use the charity's official social networking accounts for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. Authorisation is only provided by the Associate Director of

Communications (Digital) and / or Head of Digital Marketing / Digital Marketing Manager, and it is typically granted when social media-related tasks form a core part of a staff members' job. No other staff member or volunteer is permitted to post content on Human Appeal's official channels without the permission of the Associate Director of Communications (Digital).

14.2 All staff members authorised to use the official charity social media accounts must complete comprehensive training before participating in any social media activities. Detailed requirements and restrictions will be provided in a briefing document during the training session. Authorised social media staff will receive annual training on technical and legal aspects of social media usage. Additionally, all employees will participate in yearly social media training and refreshers to stay updated on the Global Social Media Policy.

- 14.2.1 The Communications Department (Digital) is responsible for managing access controls.
- 14.2.2 **Password management:** Passwords are securely stored by the IT Department and are changed every quarter. Additionally, access levels are reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- 14.2.3 **Immediate revocation of access:** Access is revoked immediately when a staff member leaves the organisation. For temporary access, such as for fundraisers or volunteers covering on the ground events, access is granted and revoked as needed to ensure security.

This policy ensures that only trained and authorised personnel can manage the charity's social media accounts, maintaining a high standard of security and consistency in communication.

14.3 Authorised users will have access to the following official charity platforms:

- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/HumanAppeal.UK/>
- **Instagram:** humanappeal
- **Threads:**
- **X:** @HumanAppeal
- **LinkedIn:** <https://uk.linkedin.com/company/human-appeal>
- **Youtube:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/humanappealint>
- **Snapchat:** HumanAppeal
- **TikTok:** @humanappealuk

14.4 Social media sites and services include (but are not limited to):

- Popular social networks like **Facebook, TikTok** and **X**.
- Photographic and video sharing social networks like **Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, YouTube** and **Vimeo**.
- Professional social networks like **LinkedIn**.
- Social messaging apps like **WhatsApp**.

#### 14.5 Campaign-specific accounts

To avoid diluting the regular official social media channels, Human Appeal's Communication Department may on occasion create campaign specific accounts. Human Appeal will consider creating a campaign specific social media account when the subject matter / campaign is niche or specialist (i.e. of limited interest to the bulk of our followers; or with a specific target audience such as young people/women/vulnerable workers). When additional accounts are used Human Appeal will cross-reference and repost any content of relevance to the different sets of followers.

## 15. Purpose of Human Appeal's social media accounts

15.1 Social media is a part of our working lives. It can help us do our jobs better; from the Online Team using Facebook to share information about our campaigns, to fundraisers gaining support for their activities on X. Human Appeal is committed to making the best use of all available technology and innovation to

improve the way we do business. We are keen to encourage staff to make effective use of social media where it helps them to do their jobs.

15.2 In general, authorised users should only post updates, messages or otherwise use these official charity social media accounts to:

- 15.2.1 Raise public awareness of humanitarian issues.
- 15.2.2 Promote new marketing campaigns.
- 15.2.3 Support new appeals and other initiatives.
- 15.2.4 Promote new partnerships and outreach for new partnerships.
- 15.2.5 Extend reach of our main charitable messaging by building relationships with relevant audiences, including stakeholders, grass root supporters and key influencers such as bloggers and journalists.
- 15.2.6 Respond to customer enquiries and requests.
- 15.2.7 Leverage existing Human Appeal content such as press releases, statements, blogs, articles, publications and other content created by the charity, partners, agencies and / or others, encouraging traffic to [www.humanappeal.org.uk](http://www.humanappeal.org.uk) or other Human Appeal maintained social media channels.
- 15.2.8 Provide fans or followers with an insight into what goes on at the charity.
- 15.2.9 To listen and participate in conversations.
- 15.2.10 Provide channels for our audiences to interact with Human Appeal, provide feedback, seek help and suggest ways to improve our products and services.
- 15.2.11 Provide live coverage of events for those who cannot attend e.g. Ramadan launch, campaign launches or promotions).
- 15.2.12 Act as a communication channel to use if other channels become unavailable, and as a medium for crisis communications.
- 15.2.13 Social media is a powerful tool that changes quickly. Staff are encouraged to think of new ways to use it, and to put those ideas forward to the Associate Director of Communications (Digital), Head of Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Manager, Social Media Co-ordinator.

## 16. Content principles

16.1 Social media posts will be clear and use language accessible and suitable for the platform on which they appear.

16.2 Language will be in line with our brand and style guide, reflecting the Human Appeal's position as an authoritative and credible international NGO.

16.3 Updates will be timely, addressing current topics of interest and contributing to the public discussion on core humanitarian issues.

16.4 Updates will be informative to both organisations and members of the public, promoting core humanitarian issues, campaigns, projects, products, services, guidance and advice with links to the Human Appeal website.

16.5 In keeping with the knowledge and information-sharing culture of social media, Human Appeal will pursue opportunities to signpost / share relevant content e.g. via third party credible media sites. Human Appeal will post multimedia such as photos or videos.

## 17. Impartiality

In order to remain an effective international NGO, it is important that Human Appeal remains impartial in all respects. This will be a consideration in the management of all social media channels.

17.1 Depending on the platform, Human Appeal may connect with or follow other professionally relevant

parties via social networks. This should not be viewed as an endorsement of any kind – political, commercial, or otherwise.

17.2 For purposes of engagement, openness and sharing relevant information, Human Appeal may repost the communications of other parties. This should not be viewed as an endorsement of the other party.

17.3 When posting messages to microblogging sites such as X, Human Appeal may use hashtags (#) to improve search visibility. These hashtags should be viewed in context of the message and wider discussion and are not an endorsement of any persons, products or services mentioned therein.

17.4 During the pre-election period of purdah, Human Appeal will be particularly sensitive to the release of any updates that could potentially affect political bias.

## 18. Copyright

18.1 It is critical that all staff or volunteers abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, when representing the charity and users may not use social media to: Publish or share any copyrighted software media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party.

18.2 If staff members wish to share content, which supports the charity's objectives, published on another website or social media site, they are free to do so if that website or social media site has obvious sharing buttons or functions on it. Once permission is sought from a Line Manager, staff members must ensure they acknowledge the author where appropriate. If staff members are unsure, they are advised not to share.

18.3 Sharing links to illegal copies of music, films, games or other software is prohibited.

## 19. Defamation

Defamation is when a false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published in print (such as in media publications) or online (such as Instagram Story, Facebook Live, Snapchat post). Whether staff or volunteers are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Human Appeal into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

## 20. Discrimination and Harassment

Staff and volunteers should not post content that could be considered discriminatory, bullying, or harassment of any individual on either an official Human Appeal social media channel or a personal account. Examples include:

- Making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, or belief.
- Using social media to bully another individual.
- Posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or linking to such content.

## 21. Accessibility

In line with Human Appeal's equity, diversity, and inclusion policy, we endeavour to ensure our social media is as accessible as possible. This includes:

- Using plain English, accessible fonts, and avoiding small text sizes.
- Using contrasting colours.
- Using subtitles where appropriate.

- Using alt text for videos and images.
- Explaining text contained in an image in the copy that accompanies it.
- Following our brand guidelines which have been designed to be accessible.

## 22. Use of Social Media to Support Fundraising Activities

Our social media platforms play a key role in our fundraising efforts and engaging with our donors. Before using our social media channels for fundraising purposes, staff and volunteers should read our fundraising policy and adhere to The Code of Fundraising Practices.

## 23. Protection and Intervention (Safeguarding)

We all have a responsibility to do everything possible to ensure that vulnerable people are kept safe from harm. If you come across anything online that could mean someone is at risk, such as a staff member or volunteer, you should follow Human Appeal's Safeguarding Policies. If a staff member or volunteer considers that a person or people are at risk of harm, they should report this to the Safeguarding Team immediately.

## 24. Engaging on Emotive Topics

Human Appeal may be involved in issues that provoke strong emotions. The emotive content we share via our social media channels can engage our audiences and help us achieve our communications goals. However, it is important to plan appropriately and consider potential reputational risks to the charity before sharing.

## 25. Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a staff member releases information through Human Appeal's social media channels that is considered to be a qualifying disclosure under Human Appeal's Whistle Blowing Policy, Human Appeal's Whistle Blowing Policy must be initiated before any further action is taken.

## 26. Libel

Staff and volunteers should be aware that online text has the same status in law as the printed word. This means that comments or direct messages on social media sites could be actionable in law in exactly the same way as the printed word for breaches of legislation such as Data Protection legislation or the laws surrounding libel and defamation.

Libel occurs when a false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff or volunteers are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not bring Human Appeal's name into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals, organisations, or groups.

## 27. Social media moderation

Human Appeal's social media channels are actively moderated on a daily basis to maintain a positive and respectful environment. While we strive to engage with as many comments and queries as possible, we cannot respond to every interaction. For urgent issues, please contact us directly at [customercare@humanappeal.org.uk](mailto:customercare@humanappeal.org.uk).

On occasion, we will exercise the right to delete posts and ban users, including Human Appeal staff members.

27.1 Our moderation approach includes the following:

**Content Removal:** We reserve the right to delete posts and, in some cases, ban users who violate our community standards. Content will be removed if it:

- 27.1.1 Is islamophobia, racist, sexist, or promotes religious intolerance.
- 27.1.2 Contains abusive, obscene, or offensive language, or links to such material.
- 27.1.3 Includes abusive language or violence towards individuals or organisations.
- 27.1.4 Uses swear words or other forms of profanity.
- 27.1.5 Promotes gambling, drug use, terrorism, or cults.
- 27.1.6 Is libellous, misleading, or contains inaccurate accusations.
- 27.1.7 Is spam, including repetitive promotions or self-promotion.
- 27.1.8 Is irrelevant to the topic of conversation or designed to cause disruption.
- 27.1.9 Aims to create a nuisance to the page administrator or other users.

**27.2 Moderation of Third-Party Content:** While we do not take responsibility for the content of third-party posts, we will take action against any content that violates our community standards, including reporting serious breaches to relevant authorities

**27.3 Comment Response and Engagement:** We aim to join conversations and engage with relevant comments. However, we may not respond to all comments. Comments that are constructive and align with our values will be prioritised for engagement. We will also like or reshare posts that positively contribute to our mission and align with our values.

**27.4 Reporting Serious Breaches:** Serious breaches or content that promotes hate speech will be documented and reported to the appropriate authorities.

**27.5 Timings, schedules and rotas:** Our Social Media Executive responds to comments Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM. Additionally, we have an out-of-hours rota for evenings and weekends, covered by the entire Social Media Team.

By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to create a respectful and supportive online community that reflects our values and mission.

## 28. Creating social media accounts

The charity operates its social media presence in line with a strong strategy that focuses on the most appropriate social networks, given where their target audiences are and available resources. If there is a case to be made for opening a new account, staff members should put together a business case explaining why they believe another social media account should be created to their line manager and the Associate Director of Communications (Digital).

## 29. Unauthorised / inactive social media accounts

29.1 Any identified historical social media accounts in the charity's name must be closed down if they do not contribute to the aims and objectives of the charity's wider social media strategy. We believe an abundance of inactive social media accounts reflects poorly on the communications strategy of the organisation. Therefore, accounts that have been inactive for more than two months and do not contribute to the charity's wider social media strategy may be subject to deactivation or deletion.



29.2 The Associate Director of Communications (Digital), Head of Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Manager, and Social Media Co-ordinator will periodically monitor accounts for activity and contact the appropriate administrator to discuss inactivity. Accounts will not be automatically removed; the Associate Director of Communications (Digital), Head of Digital Marketing, Digital Marketing Manager, or Social Media Co-ordinator will firstly contact the administrator to discuss options before deactivation.

29.3 Staff members must report unauthorised / inactive Human Appeal social media accounts to their line manager and the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) and / or Head of Digital Marketing.

## 30. Security and data protection

Staff members should be aware of Human Appeal's GDPR Policy and the security issues that can arise from using social networking sites. Please see the ICT and Security Policy for more information.

## 31. Monitoring social media use

31.1 The charity reserves the right to monitor how social networks are used and accessed through the company's IT and internet connections and outside of working hours. Any such examinations or monitoring will only be carried out by authorised staff.

31.2 Additionally, all data relating to social networks written, sent or received through the charity's computer systems is part of official Human Appeal records. Staff on personal accounts are required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy, regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether Human Appeal's equipment or facilities. The charity can be legally compelled to show that information to law enforcement agencies or other parties.

31.3 Having employees spend a significant amount of their time on Facebook, online shopping and social media is bound to affect productivity. This can put a strain on the workload, not to mention the potential increased risks of malware attacks on the corporate network. Therefore, Human Appeal have restricted site access departmentally, some departments will have more flexibility in terms of access than others depending on the nature of their work.

## 32. Social media recruitment and screening

32.1 Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the Recruitment Policy, and associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of vacancies should be done through the People and Culture Department (P&C) and promoted through approved social media channels by the Social Media Team.

32.2 As part of our recruitment and selection processes, we might run a background check on new recruits. This may include sharing your personal data with employment agencies, previous employers, the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) and our third-party screening and due diligence service provided by Thomson Reuters. If explicit permission is sought, we will also use social media as part of our recruitment and selection process, in accordance with our Equality and Diversity Policy and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy.

32.3 We run background checks on all Human Appeal employees on an annual basis using a third-party screening and due diligence service provided by Thomas Reuters. We might also use sources in the public domain, such as social media and Google for this purpose. We carry out background checks in accordance with our due diligence policies and procedures in order to protect our charitable interests such as the risk of fraud, corruption, bribery, terrorism, money laundering and hate speech. We also do the same checks for new partners, consultants, freelancers, and influencers, before we engage in any new contracts.

### 33. Know what to do in a crisis

Sometimes issues can arise on social media that can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. Examples might include:

- Allegations of misuse of funds or resources
- Accusations of unethical behaviour or misconduct by staff or volunteers
- Negative reports or criticisms regarding the effectiveness of aid distribution
- Complaints from beneficiaries about the quality or fairness of assistance provided
- Sensitive political or cultural issues in areas where the charity operates

33.1 The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity or our people. The Social Media Team regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Human Appeal so we can catch any issues or problems early. If there is an issue that could develop or has already developed into a crisis situation, the Social Media Team will alert the Global PR Team as per our Crisis Communication Process, including appropriate involvement of trustees and referencing the Charity Commission's serious incident reporting guidance where appropriate.

33.2 If any staff or volunteers outside of the Social Media Team become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Human Appeal's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) or the Global PR, Research and Advocacy Manager immediately. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to report complaints or comments that could escalate into a crisis or have serious implications for the charity. Only the Associate Director of Communications (Digital) and the Social Media Team are permitted to amend or delete content in a crisis.

### 34. Sanctions

34.1 Staff members who knowingly breach this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. (See Disciplinary Policy and Disciplinary Process Map).

34.2 Despite any disclaimers on a staff member's social media accounts, Human Appeal can take action to request posts to be deleted or other actions to be taken in relation to the post, if they think it is harming the charity's reputation by ill association or other negative impacts. Ultimately, it will be up to Human Appeal to act on any consequence depending on the severity of the post. Where appropriate, the charity will involve the police or other law enforcement agencies in relation to breaches of this policy.

34.3 To report any breaches of this policy staff members should use our Incident Reporting Process. In some cases, staff members may just want to flag a concern, which can be reported using our Whistle-blowing Process Map.

### 35. Policy ownership and review

The Associate Director of Communications (Digital) is responsible for authoring and updating the policy, which must be approved by the trustees. Our social media policy will be reviewed and updated every 12 months due to the rapidly and frequently changing social media landscape. Additionally, the policy may be reviewed before the scheduled annual review following any major announcement from a leading social media platform that would impact how Human Appeal operates on social media, or after a [serious incident](#) (as defined by the Charity Commission). All staff and volunteers will be informed of any updates via email, SharePoint, annual training sessions, inductions, and refresher courses.

### **36. Related documents**

- Appeal Process Map
- Complaints Policy and Process Map
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Process Map
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy
- Global Code of Conduct
- ICT and Information Security Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy and Process
- Crisis Communications Process


### **37. Policy Review**



This policy was prepared by the Communications function at Human Appeal. It will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis to ensure continuing appropriateness.

## Document Details

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