

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

All residents and fellows in the UTHSC Graduate Medical Education Program are employees of the University of Tennessee. As such, University employees acting in an individual capacity should exercise caution to communicate clearly that they are not acting in a representative capacity or expressing the views of the University. They are responsible for adhering to all University policies, including the University's Code of Conduct - HR0580. This policy states:

Each member of the university community is expected to exhibit a high degree of professionalism and personal integrity consistent with the pursuit of excellence in the conduct of his or her responsibilities.

The Office of Graduate Medical Education recommends that residents and fellows exercise caution in using social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Blogs, Podcasts, etc. Items that represent unprofessional behavior posted by residents on such social media sites are not in the best interest of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If using social networking sites, residents and fellows should use a personal email address as their primary means of identification. Their University email address should never be used for personal views. Residents who use social media must be aware of the critical importance of privatizing their accounts so that only trustworthy sources have access to the posted information. Use of the University email address may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

In posting information on social media, residents may not present themselves as an official representative or spokesperson for a residency/fellowship program, hospital, or the University. Patient privacy must be maintained and confidential or proprietary information about the University or hospitals must not be shared online. Patient information is protected under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Residents have an ethical and legal obligation to safeguard protected health information. The posting, emailing, or texting of patient information, including photographs is a violation of the HIPAA statute. Posting of patient information on social media will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Residents should post only content that is not threatening, obscene, a violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights or privacy laws, or otherwise injurious or illegal. If you are unsure whether certain content is protected by privacy or intellectual property laws, contact UTHSC's Institutional Compliance Office or the Office of General Counsel.

Representation of your personal opinions as being endorsed by the University or any of its organizations is strictly prohibited. UTHSC's name or marks may not be used to endorse any opinion, product, private business, cause, or political candidate.

By posting content to any social media site, the resident represents that he or she owns or otherwise has all the rights necessary to lawfully use that content or that the use of the content is permitted by fair use. Residents and fellows also agree that they will not knowingly provide misleading or false information, and that they will indemnify and hold the University harmless for any claims resulting from the content.

Each program will provide training to help residents and fellows understand how University and program policies apply to social media and professionalism.

The UTHSC Code of Conduct policy can be accessed in its entirety on the University and GME websites and identifies certain commonly held values and associated behaviors by which the University as a community is measured and governed.