

Amendment to Saint Peter's Employee Handbook

Pursuant to paragraph T of the Saint Peter's Employee Handbook, the following new provision concerning use of social media is added as Appendix F. This amendment is effective on September 29, 2025. In the event the Employee Handbook is revised in the future, this provision will be incorporated into paragraph M, **General Office Policies**, and the Diocesan Guidelines for Social Media and Digital Communications will be included as an appendix to the Employee Handbook.

Social Media Policy

1. Overview.

a. Scope of Guidelines. The Diocese of Virginia has adopted guidelines for the use of social media and electronic communications, a copy of which is attached. These guidelines also can be found on the Diocesan website under the category of resources and safe churches. These guidelines provide standards for the use of digital media, and they are intended to protect the members of our parish as well as our spiritual leaders, both clerical and lay. In particular, the Diocesan guidelines address the use of electronic media (email, texts, various internet sites such as Facebook and Snapchat, and other applications) for communicating within the parish and the larger community. Particular attention is focused on the protection of children and families and maintaining appropriate confidentiality in relationships with parishioners.

b. Local Social Media. The Diocesan guidelines permit parishes to establish their own policies concerning the use of photographs of their parishioners on social media, and this document establishes these policies at St. Peter's. This policy recognizes that digital communications facilitate information sharing and encourage the formation of a welcoming community. It also recognizes the potential for harm if not used properly. Confidentiality, privacy and safety are key considerations in using digital communications.

c. Guideline Requirements. All employees should review the Diocesan guidelines and be familiar with their recommendations and restrictions. In addition, staff members are expected to comply with St. Peter's social media policy. If a question arises concerning social media policy, the Rector should be consulted. In the event of conflict, the guidelines of the Diocese take precedence over local parish policy.

2. Social Media at St. Peter's.

a. General Overview. Social media accounts are prevalent within our church community. Many parishioners have personal accounts, and St. Peter's also has a website and a Facebook page that are actively used to provide information concerning schedules and activities of the church, encourage newcomers to visit the church, and highlight a variety of church activities with photographs. St. Peter's may also use a link to a blog to chronicle an ongoing activity of the church.

b. Posting of Photographs on St. Peter's Social Media.

(1) General Considerations. In general, photographs of individuals during St. Peter's worship, participating in St. Peter's church events, or involved in other church or mission activities regardless of their location should be posted on the church social media accounts, not personal individual accounts. In choosing photographs to post on the St. Peter's social media, staff members must recognize that our parishioners may have differing views on the posting of their photographs. Different rules apply to adults and to minors in posting photographs on St. Peter's social media, as discussed below. Photos posted on the St. Peter's website and social media platforms are to be chosen with thought and care and guided by the values of St. Peter's. In general, it is important to avoid the appearance of favoritism or exploitation of any individuals. Friendships abound in our parish community, but these friendships should not be the focus of our parish image. The personal social media accounts of parishioners should not be used in place of the parish accounts for church activities. It is sometimes difficult to avoid the blurring of these accounts, but it is important that church activities be reflected on the parish accounts and not solely on an individual's personal account. The privacy controls and the audience are frequently different for different accounts, and not everyone in the parish would be able to see photographs posted to a personal account. Use of personal accounts also could raise issues of partiality or exclusion for those unable to see the items on a personal account.

(2) Images of Adults. Parishioners may choose not to have photographs of themselves posted on social media and may opt out by providing St. Peter's with written notice of their preferences. The church office will maintain any preference notices received from parishioners. If no written notice is provided, photographs of adult parishioners may be posted on the St. Peter's website, Facebook page, and other social media. Staff members should check with the church office for any such notices before posting any photographs to social media. It is important where photographs are posted and how they are identified.

(3) Images of Minors. No photographs of minors participating in church activities in any location may be posted on the St. Peter's website or its other social media (such as Facebook) or on personal social media accounts without the explicit written consent of the parents or legal guardian. Copies of any such written consents will be maintained in the church office. If consent is provided, minors shall not be identified by name or tagged in any way to identify them, nor will any specific information be included to identify the exact location where the photograph was taken. Photographs of minors should be included only for events that have

already occurred to avoid issues relating to the safety of the minors. This includes activities on the church grounds and events located elsewhere that are sponsored by the church or are part of mission or outreach activities.

c. Personal Social Media Accounts of Staff. All photographs taken by staff members attending St. Peter's church events in any location should be posted on the official St. Peter's website or Facebook page, not personal social media accounts, subject to the requirements and limitations described above in subparagraphs 2b(2) and 2b(3). In addition to the church media accounts, staff members may also choose to post photographs taken at church activities of themselves and their families on their personal accounts. If images of other adult parishioners participating in church activities appear in the photographs of staff members and their families, staff members should ensure that the privacy interests and preferences of these other individuals are respected. In particular, staff members should avoid including images of minor parishioners engaged in church activities unless expressly authorized as provided in paragraph 2b(3) above. When posting photographs of themselves and their families to personal social media accounts, staff members must be aware of and respect any privacy or other concerns of other parishioners appearing in their photographs taken at church activities. Staff may use the share functions on various social media platforms to cross-post from St. Peter's accounts to their own.

Adopted: September 29, 2025

The Rev. Jenifer Gamber

Rector