



## **USLAW Guidance on Social Media Activities Related to USLAW Events, Members, Corporate Partners and Clients**

### **Overview**

USLAW is an international organization composed of more than 60 independent, full practice firms with roots in civil litigation, including more than 6,000 attorneys across the U.S., Canada, Latin America and Asia, and with affiliations in Africa and with TELFA in Europe. USLAW also has a number of corporate partners who are integral to the successes of member attorneys, clients and the partners themselves. At USLAW, we strive to nurture a vibrant and robust legal community, and we are enthusiastic about using social media to open new channels of communication and collaboration. Social media can help us to communicate better about things we care about, to share our successes, and enhance our reach and relationships so we can work together to make things happen.

Social networking and blogging have penetrated the business arena, and USLAW believes with proper guidelines, can be used as an effective business tool.

Keep in mind that if a member or corporate partner chooses to identify himself / herself as a member or corporate partner of USLAW on a social networking site outside of the USLAW's social media sites, some site visitors may view the individual as a representative or spokesperson of USLAW. Therefore, members and corporate partners should observe the following guidelines when referring to USLAW, its services, and/or other member or member firms on a web site or blog.

### **Internet Social Networking and Blogging**

In order to be clear about USLAW's expectations for use of social media sites and blogging, we have come up with guidelines to provide helpful and practical advice for you while you are on the internet and identifiable as a member of USLAW.

- **Coordinate with Firm Policy** - Familiarize yourself with your individual firm's social media policy as well as state and local rules and restrictions regarding client disclosures.
- **Use Disclaimers** – Clear disclaimers must be included on personal blogs and social networking sites that specifically state the views expressed are the author's alone and do not represent the views of USLAW, its corporate partners, clients or member firms. It is best to include a disclaimer, such as: "The postings on this site are my own and do

not necessarily reflect the views of the USLAW.” This, of course, does not apply if you have received express authorization to speak on behalf of the organization from an executive level employee.

- **USLAW’s Confidentiality Policy** – Information published on personal blogs and social networking sites shall comply with the USLAW’s Confidentiality Policy, as it relates to proprietary data and disclosure of constituent information, as well as state and local ethical restrictions regarding the disclosure of client’s name and information. This provision also applies to comments posted on other blogs, forums, and social networking sites.
- **Courtesy** – In communications and blogs related to or referencing USLAW, its members, clients, partners, its constituents, and its employees, individuals must be polite and courteous and must not use profanity, obscenities, vulgar language, or harassing language that violates federal, state, and local laws.
- **Reflection on USLAW** – Be aware that your online presence reflects on USLAW and that your actions captured via images, posts, or comments can be perceived to reflect that of USLAW.
- **Intellectual Property** – The use of the USLAW’s intellectual property for commercial or competitive purposes is prohibited. Member and partners shall respect copyright laws, and reference or cite sources appropriately.
- **Personal, Confidential Information** – Be certain that any information you publish online is not confidential information (e.g., individually identifiable health information, private financial information of donors, internal strategies).
- **Act Responsibly and Ethically** – Review what you are posting to ensure it will be understood in the spirit in which it was intended.
- **Honor Our differences** – USLAW will not tolerate discrimination or harassment (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected bases under federal, state, or local laws, regulations or ordinances).
- **Correct Mistakes** – If you post something that was a mistake, please correct or modify your post with the updated or correct information and note that you have done so.
- **Be Self-Aware** – Recognize that others will associate your social media activity with USLAW when you identify your association with USLAW.
- **Recognize Content will be Shared** – Understand that anything you share digitally can be distributed on the internet, and most content is searchable. Even if you share a

comment, picture or video in a site that you believe is "private," anyone can take it and share outside, so keep in mind that all content is explicitly or potentially public.

### **Best Practices at USLAW Events**

Attendees at USLAW Events such as Conferences, Exchanges, dinners and social gatherings are encouraged to enjoy themselves. Be respectful of your fellow attendees. Please do not photograph, video or otherwise record another member, client or corporate partner unless you have that person's permission to do so and advise her or him that you may share what you have recorded. Understand that anything you share digitally can be distributed on the internet, and most content is searchable. Even if you share a comment, picture or video in a site that you believe is "private," anyone can take it and share outside, so keep in mind that all content is explicitly or potentially public. Something that may be fun at the moment, is something that an attendee may not want to share with those not at the USLAW Event. USLAW reserves the right to take appropriate steps to ensure that our members, corporate partners and clients are respectful of each other.