

PDH Academy

PO Box 449
Pewaukee, WI 53072
888-564-9098
pdhacademy@gmail.com

Social Media and Ethical Social Work Practice

Course Abstract

This course applies the NASW Code of Ethics (2017) to the use of social media in social work practice. Social media is used as an umbrella term that encompasses a variety of applications characterized by interaction and exchange of information. The course discusses risks and benefits of social media use and professional boundaries. It introduces several applications that could be used by social workers in professional practice. It is appropriate for both beginning social workers, as well as those who have more experience but are interested in how social media can be used ethically in social work practice.



"This program is Approved by the National Association of Social Workers (Approval #886745725-8431) for 1.5 continuing education hours."

Learning Objectives

1. Recognize that the NASW Code of Ethics, revised in 2017, provides guidance in the use of social media.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the risks and benefits of social media use in social work practice.
3. Use the document Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice as a resource for using social media ethically.
4. Identify at least one application that can be used in social work practice.
5. Demonstrate understanding of appropriate professional boundaries related to social media use.
6. Recognize that it is not ethical to search clients' social media accounts except in compelling circumstances or when the client gives consent.

Timed Agenda/Outline

- | | |
|---|---------|
| A. Read Importance of Social Work and Social Media | (6 min) |
| 1. Read Case Study and apply how social media affects social workers every day situations | (4 min) |
| 2. Read Reflection on your digital literacy skills and answer questions to identify skills that you may need to develop further for your professional use | (2 min) |
| 3. Answer review and check your understanding with review of social media apps for social work | (1 min) |
| B. Read Ethical Use of Social Media and the Learn about the Revised Standards for Technology | (4 min) |

1. Read Case study and incorporate The Standards for Technology in Social Work Practice	(3 min)
2. Read Reflection on Cybercounseling and consider how this would work or not work for your professional practice and what are the ethical issues	(2 min)
3. Answer review on finding guidance on ethical issues and social media in social work	(1 min)
C. Read A Source of Support and Community	(5 min)
1. Read Case Study on Applying how to use apps effectively by cooperation and communication (NASW Code of Ethics, 2.01(c) p. 18	(3 min)
2. Read Reflection whether you should have a client interact with you in a way you are comfortable or in a way that they are comfortable?	(1 min)
3. Review your Understanding of clients use of social media for therapy benefits	(1 min)
D. Read Examples of Social Media Use in Social Work and how this can empower you as a Social Worker	(5 min)
1. Set up your own Twitter account to improve your social media knowledge for your social work profession	(5 min)
2. Read Reflection on your comfort as a social worker and the clients comfort in using technology and social media	(2 min)
3. Review on learning social media apps and the best way to learn as a social worker	(1 min)
E. Read Your Online Identity	(3 min)
1. Read Case Study and learn how the blurring of personal and professional identities can be problematic	(4 min)
2. Read Reflection: Is it ethical practice to combine your professional and personal lives?	(2 min)
3. Review what NASW Code of Ethics provides about having private conduct interfere with professional responsibilities	(1 min)
F. Read Maintaining Professional Boundaries	(4 min)
1. Read Example of Applying Professional Boundaries and consider how you would handle	(2 min)
2. Read Reflection on rejection caused by social media and consider what this may do to your social work profession	(1 min)
3. Review on best time to inform clients on your Professional boundaries for social media	(1 min)
G. Read Client Privacy and Confidentiality	(4 min)
1. Read Case Study and learn about protecting your clients privacy and confidentiality	(2 min)
2. Read Reflection and imagine your defense on confidentiality and use of social media in this circumstance	(2 min)
3. Review question and short case study on the right thing to do in regards to a client's privacy and confidentiality	(1 min)
H. Read Providing Direct Services – Micro and Mezzo Practice	(5 min)
1. Read Case Study and decide whether Cybertherapy is permissible?	(2 min)
2. Read Reflection of offering therapy service over the Internet and the many situations that may arise	(1 min)
3. Short case study situation on Cybertherapy and what you should do	(2 min)
I. Read Advocacy for Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice	(3 min)
1. Read about Advocacy with use of digital tools	(2 min)
2. Read Reflection and ponder on how you can participate in what you are passionate about	(2 min)
3. Short Case Study situation and the best way to contribute to a cause	(1 min)
J. Read Conclusion: Making Ethical Choices in a Changing Environment	10 min
1. Read tips and advice on Safe Social networking for Social Workers and Navigating Social Media	(3 min)
2. Read reflection on what an employer might have to say about your social media history	(2 min)
3. Review question on what is best way to protect your representation on social media	(1 min)
Estimated Course Time Read Article	102 min

Delivery Method

Correspondence/internet self-study course, including a provider-graded final exam. To earn continuing education credit for this course, you must achieve a passing score of 80% on the final exam.

Course Author Biography

Laura Gibson, PhD, LCSW, has been practicing clinical social work for more than 18 years. She earned a bachelor of science degree in psychology from Bridgewater State College (now Bridgewater State University), a master's degree in social work from the University of Southern Indiana, and a doctor of philosophy degree in social work from the University of Louisville. Dr. Gibson is a licensed clinical social worker in both Indiana and Kentucky. She is an item writer for the Association of Social Work Board's (ASWB) master's-level licensing examination for social workers and is a former member of the Examination Committee. She is a book review editor for the *Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics*. Dr. Gibson is an assistant professor and the MSW Program Director for Brescia University in Owensboro, Kentucky.