



Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Melbourne Anglican Diocesan Corporation

Policy	Social media community standards, The Melbourne Anglican
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1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to set out standards for users of *The Melbourne Anglican's* social media platforms. Adherence to these standards will help foster a community in which conversation can flourish in a safe, inclusive and productive way.

2. Scope

This policy will be applied to all users of *The Melbourne Anglican* social media platforms. We require all users of these platforms to adhere to the behaviours outlined in this policy in their interactions on these platforms.

3. Definitions

- Social media: Any third-party website or application used to create or share content.
- Other terms are defined as needed

4. Related Legislation and Policies

- *ADoM social media policy*
- *The Melbourne Anglican editorial policy*
- *ADoM Privacy Policy*

5. Policy Guidelines

5.1. Aim

This policy lays out the manner in which *The Melbourne Anglican* will approach the monitoring and moderating of comments on its social media platforms, as mentioned in the ADoM social media policy.

The Melbourne Anglican aims to facilitate a community on its social media platforms which allows for conversation to flourish in a safe, inclusive and productive way.



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Through our content *The Melbourne Anglican* aims to encourage, connect, support, celebrate, equip and challenge readers. Reader engagement on social media platforms has the potential to help us achieve these aims.

We want to foster healthy conversation and debate, allowing for a wide range of voices and opinions to be heard. We value conversation and debate that grows and challenges all involved.

To achieve this, conversations must be conducted respectfully, thoughtfully and constructively. Conversations on some topics may require active management to create space for a range of voices to be heard.

Social media has changed readers' experience of responding to news stories as compared to traditional print or broadcast media, making the experience more direct and immediate. However reader contributions published by news outlets in traditional media have always been curated, with considerations including quality, accuracy, legality, tone and balance.

This policy exists with reference to *The Melbourne Anglican's* editorial policy, which governs the content of *The Melbourne Anglican* in print and all online platforms, and the ADoM social media policy.

5.2 Requirements for social media users

We want our social media platforms to be a place where healthy conversation and debate can thrive. To create space for this, we require all social media users to adhere to the following standards of behaviour in their contributions. Details of consequences for failure to adhere to these standards are detailed in 5.5.

- Contributions must show **respect for others**. Even though you can't see them when engaging online, the person you're talking to is a real person. What you write should be polite, pleasant and assume good intent on the part of others.
- Contributions must be **on topic** and engage with the issue presented in the initial post. This is necessary so conversations can explore ideas presented in any article in the depth they deserve. Off topic contributions have the potential to derail conversations. We understand that any conversation can be wide-ranging and draw on a range of examples and parallels, we will take context into account when applying this.



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- Contributions must be **constructive**. They must offer something new, of value to other people participating in or reading the conversation. This helps all parties involved to explore issues in more depth.

5.3 What we ask of social media users

If all our social media users adopt the following behaviours, the platform, community and conversation will function at its best to serve all users.

- Take responsibility for the quality of the conversation. Make it your goal to support a good conversation, rather than to win an argument.
- Kindness. Being kind to others rarely goes astray!
- Real listening, genuine interest in other people's opinions. We all love being listened to, so consider it an application of the golden rule.
- Open-mindedness. Conversations on social media can be a great chance to learn about others' points of view.
- Assume others' contributions have been made in good faith. Most of us hold our opinion for good reasons. Where we differ, we will have a more productive conversation if we assume both parties have the best intent.
- Perspective. There are more important things than being right on the internet! Other people's feelings are certainly among these.
- Grace, even when we're frustrated or hurt by others. The reality is, these guidelines won't work perfectly. The only thing you as an individual can do is not become part of the problem. Of course, if behaviour violates any of the requirements listed in 5.2 – please screenshot and send it to editor@melbourneanglican.org.au.

What we won't tolerate from social media users

We want to foster healthy conversation and debate, which allows for a wide range of voices and opinions to be heard. To do this, our space must be respectful and safe, and our conversation pleasant.

The following behaviours have the potential to jeopardise this, by harming others, creating legal risk, and stymying conversation. Engaging in these behaviours may result in a warning or automatic ban.

These include but are not limited to comments and behaviours, which are:



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Disrespectful to others, such as:

- Aggression
- Bullying
- Attacks on individuals
- Accusatory comments
- Pile-ons
- Rudeness
- Swearing/rude language
- Unkindness
- Dismissiveness
- Points of view that stigmatise a particular group in society based on its characteristics. This includes but is not limited to views that are racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic

Dangerous behaviour or comments with possible legal consequences, such as:

- Harassment
- Incitement to violence
- Threatening behaviour
- Comments which may be defamatory or libellous
- Posting of personal information

Poor conversational participation, such as:

- Domination of the conversation by repeatedly expressing the same idea, excessive quantity of comments, stifling of conversation
- Misrepresentation of the points of view of *The Melbourne Anglican's* contributors or interviewees
- Comments which are factually wrong or misrepresent information within a story
- Off-topic contributions
- Trolling (commenting with the intent of provoking others)
- Derailing debate
- Comments in bad faith

Time-wasting, such as:

- Spam
- Advertising or promotion of unauthorised material



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Consequences for violation of these standards

Comments violating this policy will be hidden or deleted. Commenters repeatedly violating this policy may be banned from the page. This may take place without a prior warning. Some comments may attract an automatic ban.

The decision to hide comments or ban a user can be made by any page administrator, including the *Melbourne Anglican* journalists, editor, or other staff. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the editor, journalists, chief communications officer, or other relevant staff.

We aim to monitor comments regularly, particularly on posts dealing with sensitive issues, but we do sometimes miss comments. If you see a comment which you believe is inappropriate, please contact *The Melbourne Anglican* at editor@melbourneanglican.org.au. If possible, please include screenshots of comment you feel is concerning. A safe, healthy conversation on our platforms is important to us, so we will address such communications as a priority.

If you do not understand or are concerned by a decision to hide a comment or ban a profile, you can contact editor@melbourneanglican.org.au. We may respond if resourcing permits. *The Melbourne Anglican* reserves the right to keep decisions about such matters confidential.

If you need support or someone you know is in need of support, you can contact:

- **Lifeline** – call 12 11 14, text 0477 13 11 14 (12pm-midnight AEST), or chat online at lifeline.org.au.
- **Suicide Call Back Service** – 1300 659 467, suicidecallbackservice.org.au.
- **Beyond Blue** – 1300 22 4636, beyondblue.org.au.
- **Kids Helpline** – 1800 55 1800, kidshelpline.com.au.

What you can expect from the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

A safe, inclusive, productive conversation on our social media is important to *The Melbourne Anglican*. We aim to do our best to facilitate this.

This means we will monitor and moderate comments on our social media platforms regularly.

If we do not have the capacity to monitor comments, we may turn off comments on stories which have attracted, or are likely to attract, a high volume of heated commentary.



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We also welcome feedback about our monitoring and moderation, so we can continuously improve our processes. To provide feedback, please email editor@melbourneanglican.org.au.

We will treat any personal information disclosed to us through your use of our social media in-line with the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne Privacy Policy. Information in comments made publicly on social media will be treated as public.

Questions, complaints, reporting an issue

If you have concerns about any aspect of this policy, please contact editor@melbourneanglican.org.au.

If you believe a comment or commenter has violated this policy, please contact editor@melbourneanglican.org.au.

If you are concerned about the application of this policy, please contact the Chief Communications Officer at media@melbourneanglican.org.au.

6. Feedback

As part of Media and Communications' commitment to continuous improvement, all policies are reviewed on an annual basis. Any comments and suggestions are welcome. Please direct any feedback to the Media and Communications team.