

SOCIAL NETWORKING GUIDELINES

The Office of Graduate Medical Education recommends that residents and fellows exercise caution in using social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc. Items that represent unprofessional behavior posted by residents on such networking sites are not in the best interest of the University and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All residents and fellows in the University of Tennessee Graduate Medical Education Program are student employees of the University of Tennessee. As such, they are responsible for adhering to all University policies, including the University's Code of Conduct as set forth in Policy No. HR0580. This policy states that:

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 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. Residents and fellows must avoid identifying their connection to the University if their online activities are inconsistent with these values or could negatively impact the University's reputation.

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 these websites must be aware of the critical importance of privatizing their websites so that only trustworthy "friends" have access to the websites/applications.

In posting information on personal social networking sites, 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 and posting or emailing patient photographs is a violation of the HIPAA statute.

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