

# COVID-19 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

## Important Notes:

Before commencing any social media communication regarding COVID-19 or your business' response to the pandemic:

- review your content to ensure it is current, given the fast-changing nature of information surrounding COVID-19;
- double check any website links you post are linking to the correct website and that you are linking to official websites such as Department of Health. Misinformation is dangerous and it is best that your business refrain from contributing to this;
- if you are re-posting an image from another social media user (e.g. the Department of Health), ensure you either tag the other social media user or mention them as the original source of the image/content;
- if you require approval from your Line Manager before posting, provide them with your content in a timely manner so you can make any amendments and still have enough time to post at your preferred time of day. In cases where information is breaking news and important to share immediately to support your business operations, note this to your Line Manager to assist with expediting this approval process;
- once a post has gone live/been published; monitor your post as you may receive some questions on it regarding service delivery from clients or their family members. It is important you address their questions and concerns in a timely manner - however it is advisable to do so away from the public forum to ensure you maintain confidentiality; and
- **Remember the Golden Rule:** Once you post something on the Internet, it is there forever. Be mindful of what you post.

## Social Media Post Content

Remember to keep your social media posts short and sweet. You want to be able to capture your key message in a small snapshot that will grab people's attention as they scroll through their social media newsfeeds. Your social media posts should be short, concise, free from jargon and informative. Ideally posts should also end with a link to further information on the particular topic you are posting about.

For example:

*"In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, we have changed the way we deliver services to align with Federal and [State/Territory] Government requirements to continue to safely support our clients during this time. For more information on these changes, please visit our website: [URL]"*

## Social Media Hashtags

Hashtags (#) are everywhere. They play an important role in determining what posts show up across social media platforms and how much engagement a social media post gets. A lot of background knowledge and thought is required to use the humble hashtag effectively, however, the main thing to keep in mind when using them is to use hashtags wisely.



Key points about hashtags:

- Nothing loses people's interest quicker than seeing a post with 30 different hashtags in the caption and another 30 hashtags in the top comment. Try using 5-10 hashtags per post only.
- #COVID\_19 and #Coronavirus are commonly trending on Instagram. If your post discusses the COVID-19 outbreak, it makes sense to use this hashtag.
- Do your research on your hashtags first. Stick to using targeted hashtags that are relevant to your business.
- Remember that if your Instagram account is private, your hashtags will also be private (i.e. they will appear in the newsfeed of your followers, but not the discovery page).

## Photos and Videos

Creating a photo or video to upload on social media can be a lot harder than you think. Many businesses use stock images thinking it's an easier option, however it's often not. Matching your written content with your visual content can be tricky: you need to strike a balance between using an attention-grabbing image or relevant video, whilst ensuring it works with your business' ethos and the key message you want to convey.

When it comes to images and videos related to COVID-19, you can draw inspiration from Government social media pages such as Queensland Health and the NDIS.



**Remember to give credit to the original photo owner if you are reposting someone else's image/video from social media.**



## Social Media and Accessibility

As a community sector organisation, it is important to support accessibility across your social media platforms.

Remember to:

- **Include Alt Text to your images or add an Image Description to the caption of the images** so screen readers can capture the image description. Ensure the description you include is accurate. For example:



*[Image Description: graphics of a speech bubble, a phone making a phone call and an email. Above these symbols are the words 'How to contact the NDIS']*

- **Include Closed Captions and, wherever possible, Auslan translation on videos you've produced.**

## Keep in Mind

If you're using the COVID-19 outbreak to try to build your brand, gain "clout" (power or influence in the social media space) or go viral, you may want to reconsider your priorities in the social media space.

**Social media can support your business to share information that will reassure your clients and other stakeholders that you are prepared and responding appropriately.** This is especially important during the COVID-19 outbreak where there is a lot of misinformation, confusion, frustration and anxiety in the community.

**Stay calm. Stay clear.**