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Twin Group WhatsApp Policy

Policy statement

WhatsApp is a beneficial messaging service, allowing information to be shared quickly and securely between team members. It also provides the opportunity for managers to give additional support to team members when it is needed.

The use of WhatsApp in the workplace has the potential to create some problem areas and this policy seeks to address these to ensure the continued positive use of the messaging service in the workplace.

WhatsApp Group Administrator

If a WhatsApp group is felt to be beneficial for a team, an "administrator" will create a group and invite relevant parties to join. The administrator(s) will be a department Team Manager and will be responsible for overseeing the group and monitoring conduct.

The second nominated administration will be a further Team Manager. This is to ensure that if the main administrator is not able to access the group for any reason, the additional manager can assume group administrator responsibilities.

WhatsApp Group Members

The group's members should consist only of employees of Twin. All relevant employees will be invited to join as a participant of the group being created unless there is a legally valid reason for exclusion which has been agreed by the group administrator and explained in full to the person being excluded.

Any ex-employees will be removed from the group by the administrator after their last working day.

Purpose/Objective of Workplace WhatsApp Group

To avoid any confusion, the purpose or objective of the group needs to be made clear to all participants. Primarily, groups will be created for the purpose of sharing important information quickly and securely as well as all participants being able to provide valuable advice and support for each other, however, there may be other specially stated purposes which will be individual to each group and this needs to be made clear to all participants on group formation.

General Rules and Conduct

The rules of conduct need to be adhered to by all participants, this will minimise the risk of complaints i.e. bullying and harassment or inappropriate content.

A list of rules must be sent out as a message when a group is first created and each time a new participant joins the group.

1. Always keep to the purpose of the group
2. Contact details used by members of the WhatsApp group are personal and, therefore, not to be shared with anyone outside of that group unless authorised by the member and by Twin's data protection policy as being "fair processing.
3. Don't share irrelevant messages about other topics.
4. Don't spam the group i.e. sharing memes, adverts, or deals.
5. Don't be offended if others leave during the chat.
6. Do politely excuse yourself before you leave a group.
7. Post your message in one single text, don't post every word, or sentence in a new message.
8. Avoid 1:1 conversation in the group.
9. Do not send in repeated thank you messages.
10. The group is not to be used to berate someone or air grievances.
11. Only the administrator can add people.
12. Ask yourself 3 questions before you post, is this relevant, is this necessary, is this a good time to post?
13. Always communicate professionally using business language

Confidentiality

Each participant of a group has a responsibility to ensure that the device they use to access the group is secured i.e. password/pin protection and the group is not left open for others to see. If a participant allows other non-participants to view the content of a group, then this will be considered a breach of confidentiality, and the matter will be investigated further.

The rules governing the use of information are similar to paper records, emails and telephone calls, there is a responsibility by everyone involved to adhere to the data protection principles.

When a staff member's employment ends the chat must be cleared (all messages) and the ex-employee removed from the group which prevents access to historical messages.

Complaints/Grievance

It is recognised that one administrator is unlikely to be able to actively monitor the group and fully minimise the risk of inappropriate or offensive comments being made.

There are clear rules and a policy in place, however, there could be an occasion where a participant is offended by comments made by other participants and wishes to complain.

The complainant must not respond or engage in any discuss which they are offended by. They will need to approach the administrator of the group to ensure they are aware of the situation and the administrator will alert HR, who will assist in an investigation. Action that may be taken

- Reiterating the group rules to all participants
- Informally discussing with relevant participants to ensure there is no repeat of the behaviour.
- Removal of relevant participants from the group
- Managing the relevant participants of the group through the disciplinary process

Please refer to the staff handbook for more information on Twin's disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Data Use

WhatApp uses data, participants are advised to ensure they are connected to the WiFi before joining the group to minimise the use of their data allowance.

Ungoverned Groups

There is far more potential for ungoverned groups to create situations which will be not appropriately managed, i.e. claims of bullying and harassment. Twin Group does not authorise ungoverned workplace groups (workplace groups set up with teams without a manager's involvement).

If there are complaints regarding the content of an ungoverned group, this will be investigated further and, if deemed necessary, disciplinary action taken against all those responsible.

Appendix

Group Conduct Message

Below is the message which must be sent out when creating a group and upon new members joining.

Hi everyone,

In order to ensure we all get the best experience from using WhatsApp and do so safely, we must follow the following rules. If you break a rule, you will be removed from the group.

1. *Do not share any personal details of others on the group.*
2. *Always keep to the purpose of the group, don't share irrelevant messages about other topics.*
3. *Contact details used by members of the WhatsApp group are personal and, therefore, not to be shared with anyone outside of that group unless authorised by the member and by Twin's data protection policy as being "fair processing.*
4. *Be professional, kind and understanding in your messages. Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated.*
5. *Don't spam the group i.e. sharing memes, adverts, or deals.*
6. *Don't be offended if others leave during the chat.*
7. *Do politely excuse yourself before you leave a group.*
8. *Post your message in one single text, don't post every word, or sentence in a new message.*
9. *Avoid 1:1 conversation in the group.*
10. *Do not send in repeated thank you messages.*
11. *The group is not to be used to berate someone or air grievances.*
12. *Only the administrator can add people.*
13. *Ask yourself 3 questions before you post. Is this relevant? Is this necessary? Is this a good time to post?*
14. *Always communicate professionally using business language*

If you have any concerns about the use of this group, please contact the Twin staff member assigned as admin.

The policy applies to all Twin Group companies.