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Background

The San Antonio Bar Association's Communications Policy was first adopted by SABA's Executive Board and Board of Directors at the December Board Meeting in 2015. Any changes or updates will be recorded and updated online immediately.

Communications Policy

In order to maintain our credibility and high readership of San Antonio Bar Association (SABA) communications (i.e. social media outlets, website blog posts and calendar events, publications and membership emails), SABA policy generally prohibits promotion or publication of vendor-related products, political organizations or campaigns and will only publish pertinent messaging directly related to SABA, the San Antonio Bar Foundation, the Community Justice Program, local bar associations or the legal field. SABA accepts submissions for their communications for events via the [Event Request form¹](#) and for other requests via email (erinb@sabar.org). SABA reserves the right to reject or edit² all submissions.

Additionally, Article I of the SABA Communications Policy outlines the Code of Conduct³, guidelines for user-posted content, for SABA's online networks. Advertising guidelines can be found in Article VI, and reprint and reproduction guidelines are detailed in Article VII.

¹ The Event Request form is located under the News & Events tab on the SABA website.

² SABA may edit submissions for length, clarity/grammar and style.

³ SABA's Code of Conduct is adopted from the American Bar Association's social media posting guidelines.

Article I. Code of Conduct for Online Network

This is the code of conduct for posting user content on our network of SABA websites, online discussion spaces, forum pages and social media profiles officially maintained and operated by SABA on sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and the SABA website blogs and forums.

Section 1.01 By accessing and using the SABA network of online media, you agree to the following Code of Conduct. If you do not agree to the Code of Conduct, you must immediately terminate use of the SABA media network.

Section 1.02 By using the SABA network, you agree you will not post any of the following:

- (a) Material that infringes the copyright of another person, including insufficient copyright attribution.
- (b) Material which defames, abuses or threatens others.
- (c) Statements that are bigoted, hateful or racially offensive.
- (d) Material that advocates illegal activity or discusses illegal activities with the intent to commit them.
- (e) Advertising or other commercial solicitations.
- (f) Opinions of fictitious or third parties.
- (g) Comments posted under fictitious or imposter profiles.

Section 1.03 Additionally, you recognize the following rights of SABA:

- (a) SABA retains the right to block, remove, edit or reject postings or suspend access as SABA deems appropriate.
- (b) Posts or other material that is deemed inappropriate by a member of the SABA staff, an officer or board director may be deleted upon discovery. SABA website account holders who violate the Code of Conduct may lose their accounts permanently.

Section 1.04 This Code of Conduct is subject to amendment or modification at any time. Your use of the SABA Network indicates your acceptance of any such modifications.

Article II. Membership Emails

SABA allows the sending of membership-wide emails regarding SABA-sponsored or SABA-supported events and those of more general appeal to the legal community.

Section 2.01 To qualify for general appeal to the legal community, emails must not support the promotion of personal announcements⁴; political figures, elected officials, campaigns or parties; or fundraisers and must apply to one of these categories: courthouse-specific announcements, continued legal education, general legal community events (i.e. Constitution Day, portrait unveiling).

Section 2.02 The same message may not appear in more than three member email blasts within a six-month time frame, with the exception of routine SABA emails, and there should be no more than two membership email blasts a day unless an emergency arises. SABA takes into consideration time-sensitive submissions for email blasts and does its best to schedule accordingly.

Section 2.03 Email blasts should be short and to the point (preferably no more than 50 words) and must contain contact information or a link to more information with contact information.

Section 2.04 SABA's Executive Director or President must approve unprecedented email topics or email content that deviates from these guidelines.

Section 2.05 SABA may also send Section-wide emails at the request of the Section Chairs or Section board members. Section-wide emails are left to the discretion of the Communications Director. Usual email content relates to upcoming CLEs, meetings or Section-specific updates.

⁴Excluding death of an attorney/community leader

Article III. Social Media Outlets

SABA maintains accounts on the following social media sites: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube.

Section 3.01 SABA policy prohibits the promotion of any vendor-focused or politically-driven post/tweet on our company page. SABA only endorses vendors if it is outlined and agreed upon with both parties in an advertising or sponsorship contract describing specific social media posting details. Sharing or reposting of a link to a products list exhibited in a blog-style is the only exception outside of a SABA contract in which posting vendor-related materials is permissible (i.e. 10 Best Apps for Attorneys).

Section 3.02 SABA can share and promote legal-related events or events hosted by local or national-level bar associations, local law firms, SABA partners or affiliated community organizations. Sharing relevant content in support of the San Antonio community is also permissible on social media.

Section 3.03 Curated content from other sources (blogs, links, etc.) is also permissible as long as it is relevant to our membership in some way (i.e. work-life balance, legal FAQs) and from a credible, reliable source.

Section 3.04 Questions, concerns and comments posted by users on social media should be responded to in a timely manner. Users should be encouraged to interact with SABA through the SABA website. SABA cannot guarantee a response to users via social media.

Section 3.05 User-posted content on SABA's social media sites is held to the standards of SABA's Code of Conduct as detailed in Article I.

Section 3.06 Social Media sites should be moderated once each day, including weekends. Furthermore, the SABA Facebook page does not allow direct messaging, and the Communications Director must approve Facebook posts before the site will publish them.

Article IV. Blog Posts and Website

The SABA website hosts a community calendar and blog posting space, which is managed by SABA's Communications Director.

Section 4.01 SABA blog posts should not promote in any way a particular political party, elected official, political figure or event, nor may a post contain one-sided opinions of social issues absent of relation to legal cases or legal community-related research.

Section 4.02 All SABA authors and post commenters are held accountable to SABA Code of Conduct as detailed in Article I. User blog posts must be approved by the Communications Director prior to posting. Secondly, the Communications Director is notified via email immediately of all posted blog comments.

Section 4.03 SABA maintains the right to edit or delete blog posts at any time. If a blog post is deleted, SABA must notify the author with written reasoning of the deletion.

Section 4.04 The SABA Communications Director manages all calendar event requests and will approve posting of events related but not necessarily restricted to the following: SABA, San Antonio Bar Foundation, Community Justice Program, local and national bar associations, legal events or pertinent community events.

Article V. Publications

SABA prints two regular publications: The *Subpoena* Newsletter (monthly) and *San Antonio Lawyer* Magazine (bi-monthly).

Section 5.01 *Subpoena* and *San Antonio Lawyer* content is approved or rejected by either the newsletter Editor-in-chief, SABA Communications Director, or magazine Editor-in-chief, SABA Publications Chair. All approved content is subject to editing for style, grammar and length. Published content does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Publisher or its staff, and SABA may include a disclaimer expressing that fact.

Section 5.02 Newsletter submissions should be sent to SABA's Communications Director, while magazine submissions should be sent to SABA's Publications Chair.

Section 5.03 The board or Executive Director reserves the right to reject any submissions for the publications with a written explanation to the Editor-in-chief.

Article VI. Advertising Guidelines

SABA's publications and website have space for purchased and non-purchased advertising. Publication advertising for the *Subpoena* and *San Antonio Lawyer* is managed by a third-party vendor. Website advertising and non-purchased advertising is managed by the Communications Director.

Section 6.01 Purchased advertising shall not reflect political parties, campaigns or fundraising efforts. Purchased advertising rates are set by the Communications Director and SABA's third-party vendor.

Section 6.02 Non-purchased advertising is advertising approved by the Communications Director for the promotion of legal-related events (CLE, legal conferences, etc.) at the request of related-legal organizations or bar associations.

Section 6.03 Sponsorship advertising⁵ is restricted advertising that has been decided upon in a contractual or written agreement by both parties (the vendor/organization and SABA). "Thank you to our seminar vendors" or "Provided by _____, a sponsor of the San Antonio Bar Association" are examples of sponsorship advertisements.

- (a) On occasion, sponsorship agreements may contain guaranteed space for an article or articles related to the legal industry in relation to the sponsor's product or service to appear in an issue of the *Subpoena*. SABA maintains editorial control over the sponsorship articles, which must be approved by the Communications Director. Article restrictions should be declared prior to the contractual agreement.
- (b) Other non-sponsor organizations may submit articles to be included in the *Subpoena*, but they are not guaranteed placement and must abide by the same editorial and approval standards as a sponsor article.

⁵ Sponsorship advertising applies to sponsors of SABA (i.e. underwriters or SABA-utilized vendors) or sponsors of SABA events. Sponsorship ads should notate the vendor/organization as a sponsor and not an advertiser.

Article VII. Reprint and Reproduction of Content

Section 7.01 SABA publications may reprint content with the written agreement of the original publisher. The reprinted article must denote the original publication of the article.

Section 7.02 Original SABA content may be reprinted with the written agreement of the Communications Director. Reprint requests must be submitted via email for individual articles. Written agreement for reprint permission is effective for individual requests and does not give another party privilege to reprint additional resources or content besides the content detailed in the agreement. Reprint requests may take up to one week for review. Reprint requests must also include the type of media for the reproduction or reprint (i.e. online or print). The amount of copies for reproduction must be included in the request if the material is to be reproduced in over 250 copies. SABA reserves the right to refuse or revoke reprint privileges for any reason.