

River Valley Health (RVH)

Psychology Internship Program

Policy on Social Media and Electronic Communication

Interns who use social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) and other forms of electronic communication should be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by Patients, Colleagues, Faculty, and others. As such, Interns should make every effort to minimize material that may be deemed inappropriate for a psychologist in training. To this end, Interns should set all security settings to private and should avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Interns should consider restricting the amount of personal and professional information posted on these sites, are advised not to post their affiliation with RVH, and should never include Patients as part of their social network or include any information that might lead to the identification of a Patient, or compromise Patient confidentiality in any way. Interns are reminded that, if they identify themselves as an Intern in the program, the RVH Internship program has some interest in how they are portrayed. If Interns are reported doing or are depicted on a website or in an email as doing something unethical or illegal, then that information may be used by the RVH Internship program to determine probation or even termination. Interns are also advised to restrict personal cell phone usage and texting during work hours. Interns should never include Patient information in texts. As a preventive measure, the RVH Internship program advises that Interns (and Faculty) approach social media and electronic communication carefully. The American Psychological Association's Social Media/Forum Policy may be consulted for guidance: <http://www.apa.org/about/social-media.aspx>.

Note: This policy is based in part on the policies developed by the University of Denver, University of Albany, University of Kansas, and San Diego State University