

1. Purpose

Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Incorporated (NHWV) employs a variety of forms of communication in establishing our brand and promoting our key messages to the community. These include, printed material (e.g. brochures, newsletters, signage) digital (e.g. Neighbourhood Watch websites, eNewsletters, Facebook, email, YouTube, other social media pages, and audio) and in person (e.g. presentations to community groups).

This policy aims to ensure that all NHWV and Group communications are of a high standard and to protect NHWV and volunteers against legal action.

2. Scope

This policy relates to the use of all forms of branded communication and applies to all employees, volunteers and contractors (referred to throughout as representatives) of Neighbourhood Watch in Victoria.

3. Approval

This policy was issued under the authority of the Board of Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Incorporated and represents the current policy of NHWV until it is revised or rescinded.

4. Communication content

Representatives shall not communicate content that:

- 4.1. Might be misconstrued in a way that could damage the reputation of NHWV, even indirectly.
- 4.2. Is a political comment of any kind (e.g. endorsement, electioneering or debate).
- 4.3. Discriminates against any person(s) race, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation.
- 4.4. Promotes vigilantism or any activities that can be deemed as such.
- 4.5. Discloses any confidential, internal or sensitive information relating to Victoria Police, NHWV or its representatives.
- 4.6. Links to social media accounts, websites or third parties that promote behaviours that are not in line with NHWV principles and values.
- 4.7. Is in contravention of any other relevant NHWV policy or guidelines.
- 4.8. Makes defamatory or libellous comments or is abusive and/or harasses or threatens others.

- 4.9. Contains obscene or offensive language or imagery.
- 4.10. Infringes the intellectual property rights or copyright of others.
- 4.11. Promotes commercial or personal interests unrelated to NHWV or is in direct conflict with existing NHWV supporters, sponsors and sanctioned activities.

5. Authority to publish

No material relating to policy or the views of NHWV or the Board of Management or any material of a confidential nature may be published without the permission of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), NHWV.

6. Representation of NHW

Office bearers of local groups can be the authorised spokesperson to represent the NHW group and comment upon local issues, as long as such comment complies with this and all other policies. Attention is particularly drawn to **Item 7: Political statements — political neutrality below.**

Board members and CEO of NHW Victoria are the authorised spokespersons to represent the State body and comment upon both local and statewide issues, as long as such comment complies with this and all other policies. Attention is particularly drawn to **Item 7: Political statements — political neutrality below.**

7. Political statements — political neutrality

Neighbourhood Watch in Victoria is apolitical (politically neutral). Reference to any political party or issue must be avoided. There are a few common-sense rules to follow to ensure that NHWV remains apolitical.

- 7.1. NHW is apolitical and that means we offer no real or perceived support or endorsement to any politician or political party.
- 7.2. We will follow the direction of the government of the day only if it fulfils the NHW Victoria charter to create safer communities through crime prevention and we do so in an apolitical way.
- 7.3. Local NHW groups can voice their support for crime prevention initiatives, provided that they make no political comment.
- 7.4. A group can accept support of a local Member of Parliament (MP) by way of printing the group's newsletter, and include a short acknowledgement of the local MP by name only. The acknowledgement can include a small picture of MP but without reference to their political party. An example of an approved acknowledgement is published within the Volunteers Toolkit.

- 7.5 NHW discourages any politicians or political candidates attending meetings called to determine the level of community interest in NHW or to establish an NHW group. The current local MP may attend such meetings by invitation only.
- 7.6 A local MP can attend a NHW event or NHW representatives can attend an event at the invitation of the local MP if such attendance is consistent with this policy. In such circumstances the politician is acknowledged as the local MP and not by party allegiance.
- 7.7 NHW discourages any representative from attending or speaking on behalf of NHW at any town hall style meeting that is likely to be overly political or is arranged by a political party or its lobbyists.
- 7.8 If a representative wishes to promote or participate in a party-political event or communication, they must do so without NHW branding or affiliation.
- 7.9 Caution should be applied to having photos taken with politicians and, in particular, candidates during a pre-election period where it could be inferred that NHW is endorsing the politician, party, or policies.

8. Branding guide

To ensure professional presentation and consistency, all communications and correspondence should adhere to the NHWV brand identity guide which is available at www.nhw.com.au

9. Policy management

This policy is to be reviewed every 12 months.

The CEO and the Board of Neighbourhood Watch Victoria are responsible for reviewing or making modifications to the policy and publishing exemptions.

10. Breaches

Any breach of this policy must be reported to the CEO, Neighbourhood Watch Victoria

Representatives may be required to remove/delete/destroy/amend communication material deemed to constitute a breach of this policy or NHWV may take disciplinary action against the Member in accordance with Clause 19 of the Rules.

11. Authorisation

This policy has been authorised and issued by the Board of Management, Neighbourhood Watch Victoria and will be reviewed annually or more often if required.

Date effective: May 3, 2020