

NORTH STAR INTERNATIONAL ONLINE COMMUNITY TERMS AND CONDITIONS

COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS AND TERMS

We take seriously the protection and safety of our community members, and hope these commitments and terms help our community remain a safe, encouraging, and faith-inspiring environment for everyone involved. For the physical and spiritual safety and protection of all North Star members, we require everyone to agree to the following commitments and terms to participate in North Star communities or events, whether in-person or online.

1. AFFIRM THE DOCTRINE AND TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH

North Star fully supports the doctrines and teachings of the Church relating to the appropriate bounds of romantic and sexual expression; specifically, that only “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of his children,” and that “God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife” (See *The Family: A Proclamation to the World*). We also affirm the teachings of the modern prophets that “Each [person] is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and ... [that] gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose.” (Ibid. See also *Church Handbook*; 38.6.23). Content that promotes otherwise or arguments that undermine Church doctrines, teachings, and leaders—particularly those concerning the sacred and eternal nature of sexuality, gender, marriage, and the family — or dissuade members from keeping these covenants founded in Church doctrines — are strictly prohibited.

2. MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY

Members will keep all content, names, and personal information strictly confidential. Members will obtain permission before forwarding, discussing, or summarizing messages from North Star groups or events with anyone who is not a member of a specific group or event, including spouses or other family members. For family members, when discussing your situation or experiences, please be mindful of the stated desire for privacy and anonymity of those loved ones for whom you wish to be a support. Many men and women who experience same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria also experience high levels of anxiety about their feelings being known to others. As such, we encourage sensitivity to those feelings and to maintain the level of confidentiality and anonymity for your loved ones that they wish to maintain for themselves. Be mindful of confidences when disseminating messages outside any given group or event.

3. DEMONSTRATE APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

Members commit to appropriate behavior in both public and private. North Star is not a “gay dating” resource. Members will not use North Star events or online platforms to flirt or to pursue, promote, encourage, or endorse gay dating or same-sex marriage.

Sexually explicit materials are not allowed, such as graphic descriptions of sexual experiences, nude or erotic images. Any private, sexual acting out between people who have met through this community or at any event advertised through this community will be grounds for removal. You must notify group admins or moderators immediately if approached by any current or

former group member for any inappropriate behavior, including any sexually-based behavior. Please be prepared to forward proof of the conversation to the admin, word-for-word if possible.

Threatening, violent, coarse, or profane language or behavior is also prohibited. Failure to disclose knowledge of such conversations or activities may be grounds for removal from this community. These commitments apply to posts or comments made openly in the community, or in private communications.

4. ADHERE TO STANDARDS OF EVENT AND ONLINE ETIQUETTE

Members commit to adhere to the standards of events and online etiquette. When you post to a discussion group, avoid posting frivolous content. While posts that foster community can be appropriate, please avoid light-minded posts that distract from others' needs/requests for support. Please be respectful of the fact that our Facebook groups have people of various ages, sexual orientations, gender identities and ethnicities. Avoid using terms that may be perceived as insulting or belittling. Review your posts or messages before you send.

Community leaders may remove or reject any message or post at any time if found to conflict with North Star's mission and purpose. When in doubt, ask a community leader first.

5. BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN WELL-BEING AND RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS

Members take responsibility for their own well-being and commit to being considerate of the community. This community is not a substitute for personal therapy nor is it a journal or weblog. If you are in a place of trauma in your life or marriage, please seek out professional help. Voicing vague requests for support or "cries" for help or rescuing can cause the community to feel powerless. Please be specific with your requests and clearly focus on how community members might meet your needs. Please speak only for yourself and only about your own experiences, feelings, and beliefs using "I-statements" wherever possible. Never use "You-should" statements. Avoid giving unsolicited advice. This is not a place for sarcasm, shaming, name calling, blaming or fault finding, demands or threats, or correcting others. Leave correction and conflict resolution to the group admins.

6. BE SENSITIVE TO OTHERS' FEELINGS AND OPEN TO DIVERSE EXPERIENCES

For North Star to remain a safe place for everyone, especially those who are new to this community, members need to be kind to one another. North Star expects all who express messages or voice opinions will do so with an attitude of love and friendship. Heartfelt discussion is encouraged. Disagreement, debate, and bantering are welcome, so long as they remain respectful and friendly. Avoid contention, insults, and unkind criticism. Outside of a few clear, gospel-centered values, many viewpoints and opinions are represented here. You cannot expect nor insist that everyone will automatically share your views or opinions. If you disagree with a message, you have two options: ignore it or reply with your own experiences without diminishing others' feelings or experiences. Ask yourself, "What is it like to be on the other side of this scenario?" Remember that there is a real person on the other end of whatever you share. Some members of this community may struggle with their testimonies or with same-gender sexual behavior or gender expression. Please be willing to offer support to strengthen

their resolve to live the gospel. Approach differences with an open mind, kindness, and humility and allow each individual the privilege of a safe environment to seek support to live the principles of the gospel.

7. STANDARDS REGARDING DISCUSSING OR PROMOTING OTHER GROUPS, ACTIVITIES, WEBSITES, LINKS, PUBLICATIONS AND POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Events, activities, links, websites, publications, organizations, surveys, research projects, and resources referenced in North Star groups and forums must be supportive of - or not in conflict with - the values and behavioral standards of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

PRE-APPROVAL OF RESOURCES:

All organizations, events, links, attachments, and resources outside of North Star and the Church must be approved by a community leader before sharing or promoting in a community group or forum. Please give the leaders plenty of time for review.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

Members may discuss groups and organizations whose ideals and content are in harmony with the core values and teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints - whether from secular or religious sources.

POLITICAL ADVOCACY:

Members commit to support North Star's mission, "to be a faith affirming resource for Latter-day Saints addressing sexual orientation and gender identity who desire to live in harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the doctrine and values of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

While North Star supports the doctrine and teachings of the Church relative to marriage, family, and the appropriate bounds of sexuality - many topics, viewpoints, and opinions are expressed here.

While laws affecting members may be discussed in our groups, we are not a political advocacy organization. This means messages, links, and content supporting political parties' advocacy, endorsements, or promotions are out of line with the mission of North Star and not posted in North Star communities.