

Grace Place for Children and Families SMS Messaging Policy

Effective Date: April 10, 2025



1. Purpose

This policy outlines the acceptable use of SMS (Short Message Service) communication at Grace Place for Children and Families ("Grace Place") to ensure messages are used responsibly, ethically, and in alignment with our mission to strengthen and empower families.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and authorized representatives who use SMS to communicate with clients, program participants, donors, community partners, or other stakeholders on behalf of Grace Place.

3. Approved Uses of SMS Messaging

SMS may be used for the following purposes:

Appointment reminders or schedule updates

Emergency alerts or closures

Program-related updates (e.g., class reminders, registration deadlines)

Outreach and engagement (e.g., invitations to events)

Donor or volunteer follow-up (only if consent is given)

4. Consent Requirements

SMS messages may only be sent to individuals who have expressly opted in to receive them.

Consent must be documented and stored securely.

Individuals must be provided a clear option to opt out at any time (e.g., "Reply STOP to unsubscribe").

5. Privacy & Confidentiality

No sensitive personal, financial, health, or case-specific information may be shared via SMS.

Messages must comply with HIPAA (if applicable), FERPA, and other relevant privacy regulations.

Staff must use organization-approved systems or devices for sending messages (e.g., SMS platforms with logging and security features).

6. Content Guidelines

Messages must:

Be respectful, clear, and professional

Include identification of Grace Place when appropriate (e.g., "[Grace Place]: Your class starts at 6 PM today.")

Be free of slang, abbreviations, or emojis that may be misinterpreted Messages must not:

Include confidential or sensitive information

Be sent outside of normal business hours (unless pre-approved or emergency-related) Be used for personal matters

7. Record keeping

All SMS communications related to clients, volunteers, or donors must be logged or archived through the organization's messaging system, CRM, or case management platform.

Staff must not use personal phones for SMS unless prior authorization is granted and proper documentation is maintained.

8. Violations

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

Revocation of messaging privileges

Disciplinary action, up to and including termination

Legal consequences, if violations involve regulatory breaches

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed based on changes in technology, regulations, or organizational needs.

For questions about this policy, please contact us:

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Email: info@graceplacenaples.org