



## MC Community Forums Moderator Job Description

### **MentorCONNECT Mission: Community Forums**

The mission of *MentorCONNECT* is to provide one-on-one and group mentoring opportunities to individuals in recovery from eating disorders.

The Community Forums is where *MentorCONNECT* members can access group mentoring and support opportunities.

Diligent, comprehensive moderation is KEY to the success of the Community Forums in being able to provide consistent, high quality group mentoring support.

### **Reporting**

The Forums Moderator reports to the Forums Moderator Coordinator.

The Forums Moderator Coordinator is: Abbey Olson

Abbey Can be reached at: [abbey@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:abbey@mentorconnect-ed.org)

The Executive Director is: Shannon Cutts

Shannon can be reached at: [mc@mentorconnect-ed.org](mailto:mc@mentorconnect-ed.org)

### **Responsibilities Overview**

A Forums Moderator's responsibilities are three-fold:

1. Moderating all site content which includes Blogs, Forums, User Wall Posts, Photos, User Profiles, Dialogs, and other areas as needed
2. Removing disallowed content and communicating with the posting members to offer guidance, issue cautions, answer questions, and provide encouragement
3. Reporting all member communications re: disallowed content to assigned Supervisor (as noted under "Reporting")

### **Training**

New moderators will be trained by an experienced Forums Moderator. The training will take place in two parts: a) observation and, b) hands-on practice. Training time period will be determined by the amount of disallowed content members generate for observation and practice.

#### Observation:

- For this first phase, the moderator-in-training will be added to any dialogs sent to members regarding disallowed content. This allows the Trainee to observe how *MentorCONNECT*'s posting guidelines and moderation policy are enforced.
- After each communication, the Trainee can ask questions to clarify what types of content are disallowed inside the Forums.



*Training, cont.*

**Hands-on Practice:**

- For this second phase, the Trainee will take the lead in identifying disallowed content posted in all areas of the site. Once disallowed content has been identified, the Trainee will draft a dialog to the member with guidance and a caution, or other action as deemed necessary, and send it to the Trainer. After discussing the draft with the Trainer, the Trainee will communicate directly with the member about the disallowed content and add the Trainer to the dialog for further training purposes.

**Moderating Posted Content**

The forums moderator "on duty" needs to moderate the content in the moderation queue **AND** all live content posted to the site that day.

**\* The Moderation Queue\***

The moderation queue is where posts are held that require approval before becoming publicly visible. Posts in the moderation queue can only be seen by the moderators and leadership team. They are not "live" on the site yet for all to read.

*To get to the Moderation Queue:*

1. *At the end of the menu bar, click "Manage."*
2. *A box on the left will appear, click "Manage Content."*
3. *In the box, click "Moderation Queue."*

The Trainee will read all posts in the moderation queue and discuss with the Trainer whether or not they should be approved or deleted.

**\*Live Content\***

Live content refers to posts that are visible by everyone already. Every type of content must be read and reviewed: blogs, comments on blogs, comments made on people's walls, content posted in any of the forums (this includes the Member Forums and Restricted Forums), and new member profiles.

*To Bring Up All Live Content:*

1. *At the end of the menu bar, click "Manage."*
2. *In the box on the left, click "Manage Content." This will bring up the Search Content screen.*
3. *Next to Content Type, select "Everything."*
4. *Under Authors, check the box next to "Include Comments/Replies."*
5. *Next to Date Posted, enter your search dates in the fields "Between Date and Date." For example, if you want to search all of the content posted on July 21, you would need to fill in the fields to say "Between July 20 and July 22."*
6. *Next to Sort Order, select "Date."*
7. *Click the "Search Content" button at the bottom of the page.*



### **Moderation Shift Assignments**

Each Forums Moderator is asked to submit a schedule of availability to the assigned supervisor during training. Moderators will be scheduled for one or more moderation days per week, as their schedule permits. Moderators are asked to commit to moderating at least one day per week during their term of volunteer service.

**NOTE:** Moderation should be done in the evening so that all content submitted throughout the day can be reviewed.

### **Post-Training**

Once training is complete, the new Forums Moderator will be assigned one or more weekly moderation days. Moderation must be done for all content areas for each assigned day. This is the process to follow during your moderation day(s):

1. Review the Member Agreement and Moderation Policy under the "Guidelines" tab in the menu bar.
2. Review all content generated on your assigned moderation day.
3. As disallowed content is identified, copy down the member's name.
4. Copy and paste the text of the disallowed content onto your clipboard **FIRST**.
5. Next, delete the content. (In the moderation queue, click the delete button at the bottom of the screen. For all live content, click on the trash can icon next to a blog or beneath a comment.)
6. Generate a dialog (upper right-hand corner of the Forums screen) directly to that member. In the message, paste the member's full post and highlight the disallowed content in it. Issue guidance along with a simple pre-warning, caution, or suspension per MentorCONNECT's Moderation Policy.
7. Dialog with the member as needed to clear up concerns, answer questions, and to provide encouragement and support.
8. At the end of each shift, send an email summary to your assigned Supervisor/Trainer including the names of any members whose posts were deleted and a brief explanation why you deleted them.

### **Sample Guidance/Caution Dialog**

You may wish to use the following sample cautionary letter as a template for composing a dialog message. You can edit as needed for the following types of communication:

- A simple pre-warning (issued to new members who just need to review the Member Agreement more thoroughly)
- A first caution (issued to members who have been given a chance to review the Member Agreement and have continued issuing disallowed content)
- A second caution (issued to members who have continued to post disallowed content after a first caution)
- A third caution (issued to members who seem unable to adhere to the Member Agreement)
- A suspension (time away, usually from 2-4 weeks, for members who persistently post disallowed content)
- A ban (a permanent revocation of Forums and specific membership privileges)



*Sample Guidance/Caution Dialog, cont.*

Subject: Posting Guidelines & Content Removal Notice

Dear (Member Name),

We are so glad you're part of the MentorCONNECT community! It's great to see you on the Forums participating and receiving recovery support.

Recently, we needed to remove the post "(fill in title here)" because it contains disallowed content per MentorCONNECT's Member Agreement. Please review the Member Agreement under the "Guidelines" tab in the menu bar. You may wish to read the "Blogging Tips" as well.

We have pasted your post below and highlighted the disallowed content. The (fill in number) Commitment is relevant to your post: (copy and paste the commitment here).

Because this is your first time posting disallowed content/first caution/second caution/third caution/ etc..... (Customize your message accordingly here. You can invite the member to revise the post and resubmit it, unless the entire piece is inappropriate for MentorCONNECT.)

If you have any questions about the Member Agreement or Moderation Policy, please don't hesitate to ask!

(Your Name)  
MentorCONNECT Forums Moderator

#### **Member Agreement, Moderation Policy**

Forums Moderators must be thoroughly familiar with and be prepared to abide by all of the MentorCONNECT community rules prior to the beginning of the first training shift. Please discuss any questions or concerns about the posting guidelines with your Trainer as needed during and after training.

#### **A Note About Publicly Visible Content**

All Forums content is publicly visible to the entire community except where otherwise noted (for instance, restricted Forums are reserved for certain member groups only and some content is only viewable by site admins).

#### Publicly-Visible Content Description:

Publicly-visible content may include but is not limited to:

- Personal Profile information
- Blogs (personal blog, comments on others' blogs)
- Forums postings and comments on others' postings
- Comments made on Calendar Events, community notices, and other content
- Photos/Graphics



*A Note About Publicly-Visible Content Description, cont.*

**Publicly-Visible Content Policy:**

- Once posted, all publicly-visible content will remain visible for the lifetime of the community.
- Moderators will not respond to requests from members for deletion of posts unless content is deemed disallowed per the MentorCONNECT Member Agreement.
- All members are expected to read and abide by the Member Agreement at all times— not knowing what the posting guidelines are is no excuse for breaking them.
- Moderators should always reserve the right to ask for support and/or intervention from the Supervisor/Trainer with any member content or communications.

**Communications Basics**

These simple communications basics can always be helpful when moderating Forums content and communicating with members and other MentorCONNECT leaders.

- Listening skills: Listen to what the other person is saying. It is often helpful to repeat back what you have heard from the other person before responding to make sure you have understood correctly.
- Speaking skills: Email and chat-based communications cut out 90% of how we “hear” each other— nonverbally through visual and body language cues. Spend time considering what you say, or type, to ensure clarity and minimize miscommunication.
- Conflict resolution skills: From time to time, miscommunication may occur. Stay calm. Backtrack to discover where the misunderstanding first began. Using your listening and speaking skills, work from that point forward to clear up any confusion.

**Handling Requests from Forums Members for Interventions, Referrals, or Information**

- Participation in MentorCONNECT is never a substitute or replacement for professional medical help.
- Serving as a MentorCONNECT volunteer in any capacity does not extend to offering referrals or advice about eating disorders treatment.
- MentorCONNECT’s official policy is to refer those who seek additional support to NEDA, ANAD, EDReferral, Gurze, or other similar website resources.
- When offering resources for further information, all volunteer leaders are required to give at least 3 resources, as we do not endorse particular services or providers.

**Additional Support**

MentorCONNECT is a team-based community, and all volunteer leadership roles are approached as a team. The entire team of MentorCONNECT leaders is always available for help, support, and trouble-shooting. The Forums Moderator should not hesitate to contact the Supervisor/Trainer or another MentorCONNECT leader in any situation where guidance and support is needed.