

Facebook - A Fresh Start in 2012

Facebook remains one of the most popular social networking websites with more than 800 million active users today. Bahamians, like the rest of the world, subscribe heavily to Facebook so it is fitting that we give you some general guidance on what to look for as you seek to update your Facebook Privacy Settings at the start of the New Year. Be sure to keep in mind the following basic but important checklist:-

- By default, your status, photos, posts and bio can be viewed by everyone. If you never change your settings this information is completely public. If there's anything you plan on posting that you want to restrict to certain users you'll need to engage the appropriate privacy settings to achieve this goal.
- Your contact information defaults to "friends only." If you rely on this default setting be sure you know you can trust someone with that information before you connect to that person on Facebook.
- "Friends of friends" aren't in your control. If you choose the "friends of friends" level of security for certain content consider whether you want to trust that content with people who aren't mutual friends.
- You can't take it back once it's out there. If any content you post is public, someone else could copy and post it elsewhere without your knowledge. In addition, search engines could cache that content and display it in search results for a period of time. As a result if you hide content after it has been open to the public it could still be floating around the internet long after you conceal it.
- Allowing third party applications access to your information is your responsibility. When you connect to an app or link to another website, you grant that entity access to your information, and Facebook warns you that the risk is yours. Research the app through reliable sources, and decide if you trust the people behind the app before permitting access to your personal information.

- Occasionally, Facebook changes its privacy policy. Keep an eye out for these changes and adjust your privacy settings if necessary. Facebook should notify you by e-mail when these important changes occur.

Now that you know a few of Facebook's potential privacy threats, we urge you to browse through the "Sharing in Facebook" section of your Facebook privacy setting: You can choose what you share and with whom.

The protection of your personal information is your responsibility.

Remember "Privacy is the best policy"

Feel free to contact us at dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs or visit our website www.bahamas.gov.bs/dataprotection to learn more about our mandate to protect the privacy rights of individuals.