



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



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1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish monitoring, controls and regulation of social media activity within Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador (“Hockey NL” or “the Branch”). Of key importance is both the security of social media posting as well as the content of such posts. Responsibility for enforcing the Social Media Policy lies jointly with the Branch, along with the Associations, Leagues and Teams that operate within the Branch. Diligence within all levels of hockey is needed to ensure social media remains respectful at all times. This policy presents a line of authority which must be respected ensuring that members clearly understand their individual responsibilities when sharing information on social media.

1.1 Social Media’s Role Within Hockey NL

Hockey NL recognizes and appreciates the value of social media and the importance of the social networking that results to all of its members and participants. Hockey NL respects the right of its Association, League and Team personnel and participants to express their views publicly. At the same time, Hockey NL is also aware of the dangers social media can present. This policy is intended to educate the Hockey NL community on the risks associated with social media and how to maximize the benefits attainable while minimizing the associated risks.

1.2 Social Media’s Media Advisory Panel

Each season, the Hockey NL Board of Directors will appoint a Social Media Advisory Panel consisting of between 3 and 5 members who have experience with and an understanding of current social media technologies used within the Branch. The Social Media Advisory Panel will review the current Social Media Policy and recommend to the Board of Directors any changes necessary to ensure the policy remains current and relevant. The annual review will incorporate findings from any Social Media violations and enforcement action from the previous season to ensure lessons learned are not lost.

1.3 Related Policies:

The Digital Device in Dressing Room Policy addresses the use digital devices manufactured with cameras for photographs and video recording in the dressing room area. The policy addresses the violation of the privacy rights of other individuals.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

2.1 Social Media

For the purpose of this social media policy, social media can be considered any website and/or application that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking in an online manner on the Internet. The policy will encompass public

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



communications through such Internet mediums as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, blogs, live streaming and YouTube, MySpace, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Blogs and any other social networking applications that allows users to communicate online. Emails and text messaging are also incorporated into the social media policy as are other online applications that facilitate group communication to disseminate information within teams. As social media and networks are continuously evolving when new technologies emerge they too will be subject to this social media policy. When selecting social media platforms consideration should be given to the cybersecurity features in place, and ensure good cybersecurity practices are used at all times.

2.2 Cyberbullying

For the purpose of this social media policy, **cyberbullying** is any electronic communication that conveys a message in any form (text, image, audio or video) that is intended to defame, embarrass, intimidate, harass or is otherwise intended to harm, insult or humiliate another in a deliberate, repeated or hostile and unwanted manner. In addition, any communication of this form that prevents a safe and positive environment for all may also be considered cyberbullying. Communication of this form, whether it occurs under a person's true or false identity is still considered cyberbullying and will be dealt with accordingly.

2.3 Hockey NL Community

For the purposes of this social media policy, the Hockey NL Community involves all Associations, Leagues and Team personnel and participants. This includes, but is not limited to, directors, administration, coaches, managers, players, officials, staff, parents and family members involved in the Branch with the sport of ice hockey.

3.0 POLICY GUIDELINES

The policy guidelines are intended to educate members in the proper use of social media, and provide guidelines for enforcement when violations occur.

3.1 Positive and Respectful Social Media

Social media content should always portray a positive image. Most social media networks involve a conversation between users. Be enthusiastic! Enthusiasm is contagious, and positive conversations can only promote the sport of hockey. The following policy guidelines are intended to promote these positive behaviors:

- 3.1.1 Hockey NL holds all members who participate in social media and social networking applications to the same standards as it does for all other forms of communications, including interpersonal communications along with traditional radio, television and print communications.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



- 3.1.2 Hockey NL encourages positive social media activity such as personal achievement, team performance, community-based outreach initiatives, appointment of coaches/staff members, selection of high-performance teams, etc.
- 3.1.3 Social media content is in the public domain and may reach further than your intended audience. Refrain from divulging confidential information of a personal or team related nature. Where practical, limit the use of full names and contact information of children, coaches or staff members to minimize the risk of being singled out for negative comments and bullying behavior by others.
- 3.1.4 Use your best judgment at all times – pause before posting. Once your comments are posted they cannot be retracted. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for your comments and they are published for the public record. They can be used in court and are considered evidence. Also, in today's workplace social media can be used by employers to screen out potential employees who may have a less than positive history on social networks.
- 3.1.5 Coaches, team managers and players may use email and text messaging to communicate. All email and text message content between coaches/team managers and minor age participants must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team related activities only. Emails and text messages from coaches/team managers to any minor aged participant must always include a copy to the child's parents or guardians.

3.2 Social Media Violations

The following are examples of conduct through social media and social networking that are considered violations of the Hockey NL Social Media Policy and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Branch, Association or Leagues as deemed appropriate:

- 3.2.1 Inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind.
- 3.2.2 Any form of cyberbullying against members of the Hockey NL Community.
- 3.2.3 Comments or remarks of an inappropriate nature, which are detrimental to any member of the Hockey NL Community will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 3.2.4 Any statement deemed to be publicly critical or detrimental to the welfare of any member, the Association or an individual.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



- 3.2.5 Negative or derogatory comments about any member of Hockey NL, local boards, teams, staff, programs, stakeholders, officials or players.
- 3.2.6 images, video or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behavior.
- 3.2.7 Online activity that contradicts the current policies of the Hockey NL or any Association or League.
- 3.2.8 Online activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.
- 3.2.9 Minor aged players often create group chats through texting or other social media applications. Such group chats are concerning because minors may engage in bullying behavior, sexual misconduct, harassment, threats, discriminatory and other inappropriate conduct that may violate the social media policy. If group chats among minor aged players are being used by teams or associations, they should be supervised by an adult to mitigate these risks. The use of unsupervised group chats should be discouraged by coaches and team staff.

3.3 Social Media Policy Enforcement Guidelines

Social media policy violations vary in terms of their seriousness and impact. As a result, sanctions must be enforced that are appropriate for each individual situation. Enforcement actions for social media policy violations can be undertaken at the Branch, Association, League or Team level as outlined in Section 3.4 Social Media Disciplinary Guidelines. In addition to this Hockey NL Social Media Policy, Association, League and Team are encouraged to incorporate aspects of this social media policy into their own governance documents. Likewise, each Association, League and Team should have a designated social media administrator who is responsible for overseeing social media activity for that organization.

The dynamic nature of social media, and the increasing capability to remove social media activity from the host site, makes obtaining evidence typically used for enforcement impossible in most cases. As a result, the following evidence may be used to enforce these guidelines:

- Screenshot, images or hard copy printouts of the offending material,
- Video clips and/or audio showing the incident,
- The actual posting if it remains online, and
- Witness testimony.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



3.4 Social Media Disciplinary Guidelines

When a complaint is filed that may be in violation of this social media policy, the appropriate Association, League or Team may deal with any matter where possible and practical. For the most serious complaints the matter will be dealt with by the Branch. Complaints referred to Hockey NL will be investigated and reviewed by the various councils in place for the division of hockey where the disciplinary action originated.

Factors that can be considered when determining who best to deal with social media violations include:

- The intent of the violator,
- Whether harm, physical, mental, emotional or otherwise, resulted from the violation,
- The effect the violation had upon its recipient, the recipient's family, the team, the Association, or the community,
- The circumstances of the violation, and
- Any previous social media violation history

Please consider the following guidelines for enforcing the social media policy for various violations:

3.4.1 Indefinite Suspension, Assessed at the Branch Level:

- Implicit or implied threats of death or serious bodily harm,
- Encouraging someone to do themselves serious harm,
- Posting of pictures/video of a threatening nature,
- Posting comments and/or pictures of self of an implied sexual nature,
- Posting comments and/or pictures of someone else of an implied sexual nature, and
- Breaking into someone's e-mail or other online account and sending messages that will cause embarrassment or damage to the person's reputation and affect his or her relationship with others.

3.4.2 Serious Suspension, 3 – 5 Games, Assessed at the Association or League Level:

- Slurs or insinuation against someone's race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation, first offence,
- Slurs or insinuation against another member or their family, first offence,
- Posting or sending unwanted or intimidating messages, first offence, and
- Tricking someone into revealing secrets or embarrassing information, which is then shared online.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



3.4.3 Suspension, 1 – 3 Games, Assessed at the Association League or Team Level:

- Posting or sending cruel gossip to damage a person's reputation and relationships with friends, family, and acquaintances, and
- Negative or derogatory comments about members, etc.: warning.

3.4.4 Dealing with Unregistered Participants:

Dealing with unregistered participants, including parents, family members, broadcasters (live streaming games) and supporters of teams and participants presents a difficult challenge for the Branch, Associations, Leagues and Teams. The expectation is that all participants in the sport of hockey, whether registered or unregistered, should demonstrate respectful and reasonable behavior at all times. Registered participants are subject to discipline applied against the privilege granted them to participate in Hockey NL activities. If unregistered participants are unable to act respectfully then extraordinary measures may be necessary to restrict their participation.

3.4.5 Filing a Complaint on a Violation of the Social Media Policy:

When a complaint is filed for a perceived violation of this social media policy, the appropriate Association, League or Team will deal with any matter where possible and practical. To document and track the complaint efficiently the complainant must file a completed Social Media Complaints Intake Form, a copy of which is included in the appendix to this policy.

3.4.6 Referring Violations to Outside Agencies:

Care must be taken with serious incidents as there are requirements in law to report to the appropriate agencies. After referring a matter to the appropriate agencies as required by law, Hockey NL must be notified as soon as possible thereafter.

4.0 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Social media and social networks are critical to how we communicate as a Branch, Association, League and Team. With traditional media channels in decline, the importance of social media and social networks will only grow into the future. Hockey NL encourages everyone to explore and maximize the potential of social media to present a positive image of our sport and its participants. While using social media and social networks the Hockey NL Community must be diligent to ensure we remain respectful at all times.

APPENDICES

- 1) Social Media Complaint Intake Form



HOCKEY NL

Social Media Complaint Intake Form

The Hockey Newfoundland and Labrador (“Hockey NL” or “the Branch”) Social Media Policy (“the Policy”) establishes guidance for the monitoring, controls and regulation of social media activity within the Branch. Of key importance is both the security of social media posting as well as the content of such posts. Responsibility for enforcing the lies jointly with the Branch, along with the Associations, Leagues and Teams that operate within the Branch. Diligence within all levels of hockey is needed to ensure social media remains respectful at all times.

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The **Social Media Complaint Intake Form** initiates a process set out Hockey NL’s approach to the resolution of complaints regarding the inappropriate use of Social Media in order to ensure the safety and well-being of our players, coaches, and volunteers.

Please note the following:

- Violations of the Social Media Policy are articulated in Section 3.2 of the Policy. Please refer to the Policy to determine whether your complaint qualifies as violation.
- Guidelines for the enforcement of the Social Media Policy are articulated in Section 3.3 of the Policy. Please refer to the Policy to determine whether your complaint qualifies as violation.
- Guidelines for the discipline associated with violations of the Social Media Policy are articulated in Section 3.4 of the Policy. Please refer to the Policy to determine where your complaint should be directed.
- Hockey NL is committed to ensuring an appropriate investigation, and in doing so may be required to share some or all of this information in the process of resolving the complaint. By completing the form, you agree that Hockey NL may share some or all this information in the process of resolving the complaint.
- Complaints will be prioritized according to the safety of participants, severity, and resources.

1.0 Contact Information of Person Submitting the Complaint

First Name:		Last Name:	
Name of Association or League:		Name of Team and Division:	
Address:			
City/Town:	Province:	Postal Code:	
Telephone Number:	Email:		



HOCKEY NL

Social Media Complaint Intake Form

2.0 The Person on Whose Behalf the Complaint is being Made

First Name:	Last Name:
Birth Date (Day/Month/Year):	Relationship to Person in 1.0:
Name of Association or League:	Name of Team and Division:

3.0 Name of Person Against Whom the Complaint is being Made

First Name:	Last Name:
Birth Date (Day/Month/Year):	Relationship to Person in 1.0:
Name of Association or League:	Name of Team and Division:
Form of Social Media Used:	When did the Violation Occur (Day/Month/Year):

4.0 Please describe the Social Media Policy Violation in Detail below. Please attach any evidence available as outlined in Section 3.4 Social Media Policy Enforcement Guidelines of the Policy and restated here:

- Screenshots, images or hard copy printouts of the offending material,
- Video clips and/or audio showing the incident,
- The actual posting if it remains online, and
- Witness testimony.

Use additional pages if necessary.

Signature of Complainant

Date of Complaint



HOCKEY NL Social Media Complaint Intake Form

-----To be completed by the Branch, Association, League or Team-----

Complaint review to be undertaken by:

BRANCH ☐ _____

ASSOCIATION ☐ _____

LEAGUE ☐ _____

TEAM ☐ _____

Date Assigned: ____/____/____
dd /mth /yr