



<b>Policy Name:</b> Social Media		<b>Date of Approval:</b> Feb 11, 2023	<b>Effective Date:</b> Feb 11, 2023
<b>Approved by:</b> Board of Directors		<b>Prepared by:</b> Risk & Safety Committee	<b>Replaces Previous Versions:</b> March 17, 2018
<b>Review Cycle:</b> Triennial			
<b>Responsible:</b> Board of Directors-Risk & Safety	<b>Accountable:</b> Board of Directors	<b>Consulted:</b> Board of Directors	<b>Informed:</b> HNO Members

## **Introduction**

For the purpose of this Social Media Policy, the policy will encompass public communications through such Internet mediums and websites as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Myspace, LinkedIn, Foursquare and any other social media network that allows users to communicate online. Social media also includes text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications.

Hockey Northwestern Ontario (HNO) recognizes and appreciates the value of social media and the importance of social networking to all stakeholders. HNO also respects the right of all Member team, League, and Association personnel to express their views publicly. At the same time, we must be aware of the dangers social media and networking can present.

The purpose of this policy is to educate the HNO membership and its registered participants, on the risks of social media and to ensure all Member team, League and Association personnel are aware that conduct deemed to be inappropriate may be subject to disciplinary action by the team, League, or Association and/or HNO.

## **Social Media Guidelines**

1. HNO holds its entire membership and Registered Participants, who participate in social media and networking to the same standards as it does for all other forms of media including radio, television, and print.
2. Comments or remarks of an inappropriate nature which are detrimental to a HNO Team, League, Associations, or a registered participant will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.
3. It should be recognized that social media comments are on the record and instantly published and available to the public and media. Everyone including team, League or Association personnel, players, referees, corporate partners and the media can review social media communications. You should conduct yourself in an appropriate and professional manner at all times.
4. Refrain from divulging confidential information of a personal or team, League or Association related nature. Avoid revealing business or game strategy that could provide another team or individual a competitive advantage. Furthermore, do not discuss injury information about any player. Only divulge information that is considered public.
5. 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.

6. If requested to participate in an online network, as a direct result of your affiliation with or participation in HNO, HNO recommends that you request approval from your team, League or Association.

### **Social Media Violations**

The following are examples of conduct through social media and networking mediums that are considered violations of the HNO Social Media Policy and may be subject to disciplinary action by the Team, League or Association and/or HNO.

1. Any statement deemed to be publicly critical of team, League or Association officials or detrimental to the welfare of a member of a team, League or Association, Hockey Northwestern Ontario, or a registered participant.
2. Divulging confidential information that may include, but is not limited to the following:
  - a. Player injuries;
  - b. Trades or other player movement;
  - c. Game strategies or any other matter of a sensitive nature to a member team, League or Association, Hockey Northwestern Ontario, or a registered participant.
3. Negative or derogatory comments about any HNO team, League or Association, HNO staff, volunteers, programs, stakeholder, players or any HNO participant.
4. Any form of bullying, harassment or threats against players or officials.
5. Photographs, video, or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behavior, including but not limited to:
  - a. Drug use;
  - b. Alcohol abuse;
  - c. Public intoxication;
  - d. Hazing;
  - e. Sexual exploitation; etc.
6. Online activity that contradicts the current policies of Hockey Canada, Hockey Northwestern Ontario or any of its member teams, Leagues or Associations.
7. Inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind, in keeping with HNO policies and regulations on these matters.
8. Online activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.

### **Discipline**

When a complaint is filed that may be in violation of this social media policy, a member team, League or Association may deal with any matter where possible and practical. Complaints referred to the Branch in accordance with the HNO's Discipline Policy, HNO Dispute Resolution Policy and/or HNO's Harassment, Bullying and Abuse Policy will be dealt with by the policy guidelines. Offenders may be subject to discipline as per policy.