

**Huntsville Minor Hockey Association**  
**Social Media Policy**

For the purpose of this Social Media Policy, the policy will encompass public communications through such Internet mediums as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Email and any other social media network that allows users to communicate online.

The policy will be applicable to all members of the Huntsville Minor Hockey Association (HMHA) Community including Directors, Executive Members, Coaches, Trainers, Managers, Convenors, Players, On-Ice Officials, Off-Ice Officials, Volunteers, Player's Family Members and Supporters and any individual connected in any manner to the HMHA or regarding a subject matter indicating HMHA or those involved.

HMHA recognizes and appreciates the value of social media and the importance of social networking to society as a whole in this current climate. HMHA also respects the rights of all members and stakeholders of HMHA to express their views publically. At the same time, we must all be aware of the potential dangers and negative impact social media and networking can present.

The purpose of this policy is to highlight some of the possible risks around social media to the HMHA Community, as well as the undesirable public portrayal its inappropriate use can cast on HMHA. Additionally, to ensure that all members of the HMHA Community are aware that conduct which is deemed to be inappropriate could potentially be subject to disciplinary action by a HMHA Team, HMHA's Discipline and Ethics Committee/Executive Board, Muskoka Parry Sound League, Ontario Minor Hockey Association or Law Enforcement.

**Guidelines:**

HMHA expects all members of its Community to follow the below guidelines as they pertain to any social media activity which directly or indirectly is related to any HMHA events, games, activities or implicates HMHA Community Members where the reference, action or communication is hockey related (specifically regarding HMHA and any of its members).

- 1) It should be recognized that social media comments are on the record and instantly published and available to the public and media. Everybody, including HMHA Directors, Team Personnel, Players, Officials, Supporters, Opponents, Media and the Community at large can review social media communications. Additionally, once something is posted online, it can never be fully removed - even if a post is deleted or taken down, once posted, anything can be copied, screen shot or reproduced, such that online postings never disappear.
- 2) HMHA holds all members who participate in social media and networking to an ethical standard and asks that all who participate do so within the framework of expecting any and all members of the public being able to view and possess a copy of whatever is posted. This extends to communication one might consider private i.e. a Snapchat story that is only posted to those within a group of approved members - anything that is posted online, can be copied and shared at any time, such that you must treat all social media and online communication as public communication.
- 3) The HMHA Community should use their best judgement at all times - please pause before posting and consider what message you are sending and how it will be received by anyone who may read it. 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.
- 4) Comments or remarks of an inappropriate, derogatory, or negative nature from any of the HMHA Community which are detrimental to a Team, the Association or any members of the HMHA Community will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 5) HMHA will not tolerate any online bullying, harassment, name calling, racist, sexist, derogatory or negative comments coming from any members of the HMHA Community directed towards other members.
- 6) Comments or remarks of an inappropriate nature from any of the HMHA community directed towards any members of an opposing hockey team or association which depict any kind of threat whatsoever will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action. Additionally, the HMHA will not tolerate any team or individual member of HMHA who participates in any online taunting of opponents, name calling, bullying, harassment, inciting of violence or derogatory comments towards opposing teams or associations -

any behaviour which demonstrates the above may be subject to disciplinary action.

- 7) HMHA will not tolerate the divulging of any confidential information that may include, but is not limited to the following: any matter of a sensitive nature to a member Team, the HMHA or any individual.
- 8) Any statements deemed to be publically critical of the Association Officials or detrimental to the welfare of a member, Team, the Association or an individual will not be tolerated.

**Discipline:**

- a) The HMHA expects any matters which come to the attention of Team Officials to be dealt with at the team level wherever possible and applicable. The first step in this procedure is for teams to share and enforce this Social Media Policy with its players and families. Should an incident arise, teams are expected to address the situation. If involvement at the team level is not sufficient to address the situation, team personnel are expected to contact the appropriate Director (Rep Director for Rep/AE teams; Local League Director for Local League Teams) for assistance.
- b) Failure of any member of the HMHA Community to follow the Social Media Policy may result in that individual being referred to the HMHA Discipline and Ethics Committee for discussion and review of the situation, incident or ongoing behaviour.
- c) Any member who is referred to the HMHA Discipline and Ethics Committee due to inappropriate conduct on Social Media may result in disciplinary action. The Committee will determine the appropriate action based on the facts and if disciplinary action is warranted this could include a member losing the privileges that come with membership in the HMHA, including the opportunity to participate in HMHA activities.
- d) Where the incident or behaviour is taken to a level beyond that which can be appropriately addressed by a HMHA Team Official, Executive Member or the HMHA Discipline and Ethics Committee, the conduct may either be referred to or automatically addressed by, but not limited to any of the following: Muskoka Parry Sound League Association, Ontario Minor Hockey Association and/or Law Enforcement.

### **Summary:**

While the HMHA does not wish to infringe on anyone's rights regarding the expression of their views publically, if conduct is deemed inappropriate and either negatively involves or reflects on any component or member of the HMHA Community, disciplinary action at some level may be necessary. The HMHA is simply requesting that all members of its Community take a moment to reflect on the message and possible repercussions a social media posting may evoke prior to actually posting online. The HMHA is requesting that all members of our community represent our association with class within our own community and beyond.

### **Cell Phones in Dressing Rooms:**

- HMHA recognizes that cell phones are carried by many of its members on a daily basis for communication, therefore, requesting that they not come to the Arena may be unrealistic. However, the use of a cell phone by anyone in a Dressing Room may infringe on another individual's right to privacy while in various states of undress, showering and using washroom facilities. HMHA wishes to ensure that everyone's privacy rights are respected.
- Cell phones should not be used in any Dressing Room, with the exception of a phone being used to play music through a speaker for the team - dependent on Coach approval.
- Cell phones should be stored away out of sight while in a Dressing Room; some coaches may choose to collect them and i.e. store them in a cell phone bag (this would be the choice of the coach).
- The use of cell phones in a Dressing Room to take photos, video and/or audio recordings, post on Social Media, text, email or talk on the phone is strictly prohibited.
- Cell phones should only be used once the individual has exited the Dressing Room - if there is a need for any reason for an individual to communicate using a cell phone while in the Dressing Room, this can only be done once the individual has physically exited the Dressing Room - upon returning to the Dressing Room, the cell phone must then be stored away again.
- Failure to follow the above regulations regarding cell phone use will be dealt with at the team level. Should the issue persist, coaches will refer the individual to the HMHA Executive and/or Discipline and Ethics Committee.

