



## **Social Media Policy**

The Ontario Ball Hockey Federation (OBHF) supports the use of social media as a way to connect with others and to promote and celebrate the sport, our programs, our events and our activities.

Social media use includes engagement on current and future online platforms such as Facebook, blogs, Twitter, file sharing, portals, emails, group chats and webcasts – whether the individual/federation is the content author, or shares or likes other people’s comments or opinions.

Unacceptable social media activity will not be tolerated by the federation or its members. This includes but is not limited to communication that:

- Is hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals.
- Is damaging to the OBHF’s reputation and/or relationships with our stakeholders and funding partners.
- Divulges confidential or proprietary information.
- Fails to respect the privacy of others by disclosing personal information without consent.
- Fails to respect Copyright Law by using logos, photos, not owned by the OBHF or source referenced.
- Includes explicit pictures and/or inflammatory language.

This policy is applicable to all members of the OBHF, including Board Members, staff, officials, coaches, players’ family members and supporters. The OBHF recognizes and appreciates the value of social media and the importance of social networking to all of its stakeholders. The OBHF also respects the right of all members to express their views publicly. At the same time we must be aware of the dangers social media can present.

### **Social Media Guidelines**

- The OBHF holds the entire OBHF Community who participates in social media and networking to the same standards as it does for all other forms of media including radio, television and print.
- Comments or remarks of an inappropriate nature which are detrimental to a Team, the Federation or an individual will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action through the *OBHF Disciplinary Policy*.
- It should be recognized that social media and comments through ‘texting’ are on the record and can be instantly published and available to the public and media. Conducting oneself in an appropriate and professional manner at all times is important.
- Refrain from divulging confidential information of a personal or team 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.
- Use best judgment at all times – pause before posting or sending. Once comments are posted or sent they cannot be retracted. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for your comments.

## **Social Media Violations**

The following are examples of conduct through social media and networking mediums that are considered violations of the OBHF Social Media Policy and may be subject to disciplinary action.

- Any statement deemed to be publicly critical of Federation officials or detrimental to the welfare of a member Team, the Federation or an individual.
- Divulging confidential information that may include, but is not limited to the following:
  - player injuries;
  - trades or other player movement;
  - game strategies; or
  - any other matter of a sensitive nature to a member Team, the Federation or an individual.
- Negative or derogatory comments about any an OBHF Team, Federation, League and/or OBHF staff, board, programs, stakeholders, players or any member of an OBHF team.
- Any form of bullying, harassment, intimidation or threats against players or officials.
- Photographs, video or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behaviour, including but not limited to:
  - drug use,
  - alcohol abuse,
  - public intoxication,
  - hazing
  - sexual exploitation, etc.
- Online activity that contradicts the current policies of the OBHF or any of its member Federations.
- Inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind, in keeping with the OBHF policies and regulations on these matters.
- Online activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.

## **Procedure for Reporting a Violation**

1. Any OBHF Member can report a violation to the OBHF BOD. The reported violation must be provided in writing, and must be filed within fourteen (14) days of the alleged incident.
2. Upon receiving a complaint the OBHF BOD will review the reported violation to determine whether it is frivolous or vexatious within ten (10) days of receiving it. If the OBHF BOD determines the complaint is frivolous or vexatious, the complaint will be dismissed immediately.
4. A complainant wishing to file a reported violation beyond the fourteen (14) days must provide a written statement giving reasons for an exemption to this limitation. The decision to accept, or not accept, the notice of complaint outside the fourteen (14) day period will be at the sole discretion of the OBHF BOD. This decision may not be appealed.
5. If a violation is determined by the OBHF BOD to be legitimate, the violation will be designated as a minor or major violation and dealt with according to the appropriate sections of the *OBHF Disciplinary Policy*. It will be at the sole discretion of the OBHF BOD to determine whether a complaint is to be dealt with as a major or minor violation.
6. This Policy does not prevent an appropriate person having authority from taking immediate, informal or corrective action in response to behaviour that constitutes either a minor or major infraction provided the individual being disciplined is told the nature of the infraction. Further sanctions may be applied, but only after review of the matter in accordance with the procedures set out in the *OBHF Disciplinary Policy* for major or minor infractions.

## **Disciplinary Action**

If the OBHF determines that a violation has occurred, disciplinary action will be carried for major and minor infractions as outlined in the *OBHF Disciplinary Policy*. Any appeals will be dealt with as set out in the *OBHF Appeals Policy*.

**Summary**

When using social media, OBHF members should assume at all times they are representing the OBHF and/or its member Federations or Teams. All members of the OBHF community should remember to use the same discretion with texting, etc., social media and networking as they do with other traditional forms of media.

Should the identity or image of any member of the OBHF community be used in social media and networking without the Individual, Team or Federation authorization, this is considered to be identity theft. Please notify the OBHF Office immediately. Any use of a player or team member's image or likeness without the written consent of the OBHF is strictly prohibited.

*Approved OBHF Board of Directors, February 2017*