

ATHLETIC TRAINING MODALITIES POLICY

Due to the nature of the contact between an athlete and a person performing a massage, taping or other athletic training modalities, the potential for abuse or misconduct can occur. This Policy (referred to as the “Manual Therapy and Therapeutic and Recovery Modalities Policy” in the Center’s MAAPP) must be adopted by every USA Hockey Member Program where any massage, taping or other athletic training modalities are permitted on a Minor Athlete.

Any massage, taping or other athletic training modality must be Observable and Interruptible, at least one other Adult Participant must be physically present, and the Minor Athlete must be fully or partially clothed, ensuring that the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals are always covered.

Prior to any massage of a Minor Athlete, and on an annual basis, the person performing the massage shall obtain the written consent of the Minor Athlete’s legal guardian. The consent must specify if it is for a specific treatment or for ongoing treatments over a period of time, and the nature of the treatment. Parent or guardian consent can be withdrawn at any time. If requested, parents must be permitted to be in the room as an observer (except for events or facilities that limit credentialing).

Any person performing a massage, taping, or other athletic training modality on a Minor Athlete must narrate the steps in the modality before taking them and seek the assent of the Minor Athlete throughout the process.

Any athletic training conducted virtually must also be in compliance with the Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy.

SOCIAL MEDIA & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

As part of USA Hockey’s emphasis on safety, communications involving any Participant, and especially Minor Athletes, should be appropriate, productive, and transparent. Effective communication concerning travel, practice or game schedules, and administrative issues among coaches, administrators, players and their families is crucial. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media, gaming, and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for improprieties and misunderstandings and also provides potential offenders with unsupervised and potentially inappropriate access to Minor Athletes. The improper use of social media, mobile and electronic communications can result in misconduct. Adherence to the Social Media & Electronic Communications Policy helps reduce these risks.

All electronic communication originating from Adult Participants to Minor Athletes must be Open and Transparent and professional in nature. Unless a Policy Exception applies, if an Adult Participant needs to communicate directly with a single Minor Athlete via electronic communications (including email, phone, text, or any social media), the Minor’s legal guardian, another family member, or another adult Participant must be copied on every communication. If a Minor Athlete communicates to the Adult Participant privately first, said Adult Participant should respond to the Minor Athlete with a copy to another Adult Participant, the minor’s legal guardian, or another adult family member of the Minor Athlete. When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to more than one Minor Athlete (or the team), said Adult Participant must copy another Adult Participant or at least one parent/guardian of each Minor Athlete. Acceptable communication platforms include, but are not limited to Group Text Messaging, PlayMetrics, Teams, TeamSnap, Telegram, Rinknet and Teamreach.

Pursuant to these requirements, all electronic communication between coach and player must be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Coaches, players and all team personnel must follow common sense guidelines regarding the volume and time of day of any allowed electronic communication. All content between coaches and players should be Open and Transparent and readily available to share with the public or families of the player or coach. Where possible, a coach should be

provided and use the organization web site email center (the coach's return email address will contain "@organization.com") for all communications with the team, players, and player's parents.

The prohibitions on social media or electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete do not restrict such communications if a Policy Exception applies.

Social Media

Social media makes it easy to share ideas and experiences. USA Hockey recognizes, **however**, that social media, mobile and other electronic communications can be especially concerning where Minor Athletes are involved. Coaches are prohibited from having Minor Athletes joined to or connected through their personal Facebook page, Instagram, or any other similar social media application, unless an exception exists. To facilitate communication, an official organization or team page may be set up and players and parents may join (i.e., "friend") the official organization or team page and coaches can communicate to the team through that site.

Web-Based Conferencing and Similar Communications

Coaches, team managers, athletic trainers and others may use web-based conferencing software (i.e. Zoom, Google Hangouts, Microsoft Teams) to meet with, train, or otherwise communicate with Minor Athletes. All web-based conferencing of any kind between a coach (or any Adult Participant) and a Minor Athlete(s) must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of training, communicating information about team activities or for team-oriented motivational purposes. Any invitation to such communication to any Minor Athlete must include the player's parents or legal guardians and must adhere to all of the requirements found elsewhere in this Handbook as if the virtual meeting were being held in person, including the minimum attire policy (found within the Locker Room Policy). Virtual lessons or live stream videos should be Observable and Interruptible. Coaches, team managers, and players may send pre-recorded technique or training videos, but must copy at least one other Adult Participant. Best practices for web-based conferencing with a team should include use of passwords for entry and/or other security precautions.

Social Media and Group Chats Among Players

Minor Athletes 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 policies of USA Hockey. Group chats among Minor Athletes should be supervised by an adult to mitigate these risks.

Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications or Imagery with Athlete

Following receipt of a written request by the parents of a Minor Athlete that their child not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by coaches or other adults in the program, the Member Program, team, coaches and administrators must immediately comply with such request without any repercussions for such request, unless an emergency exists.

Abuse and Misconduct

Social media and other means of electronic communication can be used to commit abuse and misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by any employee, volunteer, independent contractor, or other Participant of a USA Hockey Member Program, will not be tolerated and are considered violations of USA Hockey's Safe Sport Program.

A USA Hockey Participant who violates this Social Media & Electronic Communications Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.