

## **Cell Phone, Electronic Device & Communication Policy**

### **ST. ALBANS SKATING ASSOCIATION**

**ADOPTED 9/14/2026**

---

#### **Purpose**

St. Albans Skating Association (SASA) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and appropriate environment for all athletes.

This policy is intended to protect player privacy, reduce opportunities for inappropriate photographs, recordings, communications, and social media activity, and support compliance with **USA Hockey Safe Sport and U.S. Center for SafeSport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP)**.

#### **1. Locker Rooms and Changing Areas — Device-Free**

**SASA locker rooms and changing areas are device-free environments for players.**

Cell phones and other electronic devices capable of taking photographs, video, or audio recordings—including phones, tablets, cameras, smartwatches, and similar devices—**may not be used by players while inside a locker room or changing area.**

This applies:

- Before practices and games
- After practices and games
- During tournaments
- During home and away events
- In locker rooms, changing rooms, shower areas, and similar spaces

There will be **no photographs, video recordings, audio recordings, FaceTime/video calls, livestreaming, social media posting, or use of recording functions** in these areas.

#### **2. Player Cell Phones**

Players who bring a cell phone or other electronic device to a SASA activity must keep the device:

- Stored securely in their hockey bag;
- Turned off or silenced and put away; or

- Placed in a designated collection area when directed by the coach or team manager.

**Players may not have phones or other electronic devices out or in use in the locker room at any time.**

If a player needs to use a phone for an urgent or necessary reason, the player must leave the locker room and use the device in an appropriate public area.

Teams may establish a procedure in which a coach or team manager collects devices before players enter the locker room and returns them afterward.

SASA is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal electronic devices.

### **3. Coaches and Adult Participants**

Coaches, team managers, and other Adult Participants are expected to model appropriate electronic-device use while supervising players.

Coaches and adults:

- Shall not photograph, video record, or audio record players in locker rooms or changing areas;
- Shall not use personal electronic devices recreationally while supervising players in the locker room;
- Shall immediately intervene if a player or adult is using a device contrary to this policy; and
- Shall report any suspected inappropriate recording, photographing, or distribution of images in accordance with SASA, USA Hockey, and SafeSport reporting requirements.

### **4. Coach Music Exception**

At the discretion of the coaching staff, a coach may use an electronic device in the locker room **solely for the purpose of playing music**. The device must always remain under the coach's control.

A coach may authorize a player to temporarily control the device for the limited purpose of selecting, starting, stopping, or adjusting music. Any such use must remain under the supervision of the coaching staff and may not extend to any other device function.

The device may not be used for photography, video recording, audio recording, livestreaming, video calls, social media, messaging, or any other personal or non-team-related purpose while in the locker room.

A coach or team manager may also possess or use a phone for legitimate **emergency, safety, scheduling, or team-management purposes**, provided the device is not used for photography or recording inside the locker room.

## **5. Team Photos, Celebrations and Media**

**Team photos, individual photos, videos, championship celebrations, social-media content, or any other photography or recording will NOT occur in locker rooms or changing areas at any time.**

This prohibition applies regardless of whether:

- Players are fully dressed;
- Parent/guardian consent has been obtained;
- Multiple Adult Participants are present; or
- The photograph or recording is intended for team, promotional, social-media, or commemorative purposes.

All team photographs, videos, celebrations involving photography or recording, and other media activities must take place **outside of locker rooms and changing areas in an appropriate public or designated team area.**

**There are no exceptions to this requirement.**

## **6. Coach-to-Player Electronic Communication**

SASA recognizes that appropriate electronic communication between coaches and players can be a useful and necessary part of team communication and is not prohibited.

Coaches and other SASA Adult Participants may communicate electronically with players regarding practices, games, scheduling, player development, team expectations, safety, and other legitimate hockey or team matters.

All coach-to-player electronic communication must remain professional, respectful, age-appropriate, and appropriate to the coach-player relationship. Communications should be consistent with the standards of conduct expected in an in-person SASA setting and should not include bullying, harassment, threats, discriminatory or degrading comments, sexual or otherwise inappropriate content, retaliation, or conversations that are unrelated to an appropriate coaching or team purpose.

Electronic communication with minor athletes must also remain open and transparent. Coaches and Adult Participants should use team or group communication channels

whenever practical and must include a parent/guardian, another adult family member of the athlete, or another appropriate Adult Participant when required by applicable USA Hockey or SafeSport requirements.

A player may contact a coach directly, and a coach may respond as reasonably necessary, including in urgent, safety-related, or time-sensitive circumstances. The coach is expected to keep the conversation appropriate and professional and to bring another appropriate adult into the communication when required by applicable SafeSport requirements.

These expectations apply to text messages, group messaging applications, email, direct messages, social media, phone or video calls, team communication platforms, and other forms of electronic communication.

Whenever practical, non-urgent electronic communications with minor athletes should occur between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

## **7. Social Media**

Coaches and Adult Participants should not establish private social-media relationships or use disappearing-message platforms to communicate privately with minor athletes.

Team-related communications should occur through transparent channels that permit parents/guardians or another appropriate Adult Participant to be included.

Players may not photograph, film, record, post, share, or distribute images or recordings of teammates from locker rooms or changing areas.

## **8. Player Team Chats & Electronic Conduct**

SASA recognizes that players may communicate with teammates through group text messages, messaging applications, social media, gaming platforms, and other electronic means outside of SASA-controlled communication platforms.

SASA does not routinely monitor, access, or supervise players' personal devices, private accounts, personal text messages, or private electronic communications.

However, participation on a SASA team carries an expectation of appropriate conduct both in person and in team-related electronic communications. The SASA Player Code of Conduct and applicable SASA behavioral expectations remain in effect when a player is communicating in a manner that is connected to SASA, a SASA team, teammates, coaches, team activities, or participation in the Association.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- SASA team or player group chats;
- Text or messaging threads involving teammates;

- Team-related social-media groups or posts;
- Electronic communications concerning SASA practices, games, tournaments, coaches, players, or team activities; and
- Other electronic conduct that has a direct and substantial impact on a SASA team, player, coach, or the team environment.

Players are expected to communicate with teammates and others in a respectful and appropriate manner. Bullying, harassment, threats, discriminatory or degrading comments, intimidation, targeted ridicule, inappropriate sexual content, hazing, or other conduct inconsistent with SASA's Player Code of Conduct is not acceptable simply because it occurs through a personal device or outside the rink.

SASA does not intend to regulate ordinary private conversations between players that are unrelated to SASA. However, if concerning team-related electronic communication is brought to SASA's attention, SASA may review the information provided and address the conduct under the Player Code of Conduct, Discipline Policy, SafeSport requirements, or other applicable SASA policies.

Players may be held accountable for their own conduct in team-related electronic communications even when SASA did not create, administer, or monitor the communication channel.

Parents and players are encouraged to bring serious concerns involving bullying, harassment, threats, safety, or other inappropriate team-related electronic conduct to the appropriate coach, team manager, SafeSport Coordinator, or SASA leadership.

## **9. Violations**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action by SASA.

Depending upon the nature and severity of the violation, consequences may include:

- Verbal warning;
- Removal of the device from the locker-room environment;
- Parent/guardian notification;
- Removal from a practice, game, or team activity;
- Referral to the SASA Discipline Committee;
- Suspension or other disciplinary action; and/or
- Reporting to USA Hockey, VSAHA, the U.S. Center for SafeSport, or law enforcement when required.

**Any intentional photograph, video, or recording taken in a locker room or changing area in violation of this policy will be treated as a serious matter and immediately referred to SASA leadership for review.**

Nothing in this policy limits or replaces mandatory reporting obligations under USA Hockey, SafeSport, or applicable law.

## **10. Responsibility**

All players, coaches, team managers, volunteers, and parents are responsible for helping SASA maintain a locker-room environment that protects the **privacy, safety, and dignity of every athlete.**

Coaches and team managers are responsible for reviewing this policy with their teams at the beginning of each season and reinforcing it throughout the year.

**Policy Basis:** USA Hockey Safe Sport Program, USA Hockey Locker Room Policy guidance, and U.S. Center for SafeSport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP).