



Blues Hockey Social Media Policy



For the purposes of this policy:

- A Participant or Member refers to any head coach, assistant coach, manager, trainer, off-ice official (timekeeper), player, parent or legal guardian, volunteer, spectator, chaperone, or any other person associated with Blues hockey.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to educate the Blues members or participants on the risks of social media, to help reduce these risks and to ensure that participants and members are aware that conduct deemed to be inappropriate, may be subject to disciplinary action by the Gloucester Hockey Association (GHA), the host association (EMHA or BMHA) and/or the Blues.

Social media/networking

For the purposes of this Social Media Policy, social media is defined as digital technology that facilitates communicating or sharing of information, text, videos, images, etc. through electronic messaging (such as texting), virtual applications, networks, and online communities of people who share interests and/or activities. This includes any media used for web-based, digital, or mobile social interaction. This policy also includes emailing as a form of social networking. Social media features user-generated content and personalized profiles that lend themselves to engagement via likes, shares, comments, and discussion. When used inappropriately or for questionable motivations, social media interactions can be harmful and can cause substantial harm to users personally, those associated with them (family and friends), the Blues and beyond.

Introduction

The Blues executives recognizes and appreciates the importance of social media/networking. The immediate and public forum provides opportunities for, but not limited to, live streaming of games, team communications, updates, networking and promotion. However, it also provides an unsupervised medium for inappropriate conduct to occur; conduct which can be detrimental to the welfare of the Blues, GHA, Ottawa B League and our teams members and/or participants. The Blues respects the rights of all members to express their view publicly. However, any conduct deemed to be inappropriate, may be subject to disciplinary action by GHA and/or the Blues.

The Blues encourages the use of social media in a positive manner. The proper use of social media can help promote special events, fundraising initiatives and overall, the sport of hockey. Positive comments help raise awareness of the sport, the association, and the overall benefits of the game.

Scope of the Policy

This policy encompasses public communications and/or sharing of content via any form of social media/networking, including but not limited to, that which can be linked to or in any way associated (whether directly or indirectly) with the Blues, through such Internet mediums and websites such as, but not limited to: Facebook, X (formally known as Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Vimeo, SnapChat, TeamSnap, digital content enabled to be share such as text messages and WhatsApp conversations, and

any other social media network. It is applicable to all team participants, members, and team officials involved in the operations of the Blues.

Social Media Guidelines

The Blues holds all of its member and participants who use or participate in social media/networking to the same standards, as it does for all forms of media including television, radio and print. Blues members, participants and team officials should act in a professional manner at all times since they represent the Blues Rep B program at all times. It should be recognized that once published online, social media comments are on record and can be tracked, some being instantly published on multiple platforms and available to the public and media, and some which cannot be retracted. All Blues members and team officials are accountable for their comments and/or actions.

The conduct of any Blues member or participant that violates the Policy, which may be linked to or perceived to be linked to, or associated with the Blues, may result in disciplinary action taken by the Blues or governing body above the Blues. The Policy is intended to enhance and supplement, and is not intended to replace or supersede, **any** existing policies of the Blues, including those currently in force through Hockey Canada (HC), Hockey Eastern Ontario (HEO), GHA and Ottawa B League.

Below are some best practices to help protect all participants and the Blues in the social space. Adhering to them will aid in reducing situations that could be harmful to users, fellow participants in the League, and those associated.

- Use discretion when posting and/or sharing content on the Internet or through digital applications or sending messages.
- Use common sense and your best judgement at all times, considering the impacts, and reflect before posting. Use the “24-hour rule” if necessary. You are solely responsible for your comments once they are published.
- Post respectful comments and photos with permission.
- Always be courteous and respectful online
- Respect the privacy of everyone

Social Media Violations

The following are non-exhaustive examples of conduct through social media and networking mediums that are considered violations of this policy, and which may be subject to disciplinary measures by the Blues Executives, League, District or Branch:

- Statements which are deemed to be publicly critical of the Blues, Ottawa B League, GHA or personnel, its programs, employees, on-ice or off-ice officials, players, coaches, arena staff, sponsors or any other actors;
- Negative or derogatory comments about or towards any team member, Blues (host association), Ottawa B League, GHA, their volunteers, executive, programs, stakeholders, or any Blues participant or member;
- Any form of bullying, harassment, intimidation or threats against players, executive or officials;
- Divulging confidential information that may include, but is not limited to, the following: medical history (injury or other), game plans or strategies and any other information that is deemed confidential or sensitive in nature;

- Sharing or divulging photos, videos or comments which promote negative influences, cyber bullying or criminal behavior, including but not limited to: drug and/or alcohol use, public intoxication, sexual exploitation, violence, vandalism, etc.;
- Online activity that contradicts the current policies of the Blues (member associations), GHA and HEO;
- Inappropriate, derogatory, discriminatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind, in keeping with the GHA and HEO policies and regulations on these matters;
- Online activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.

Disciplinary Measures

The Blues and/or a governing body above the Blues, ie. GHA, will investigate reported violation(s) of this policy in the manner determined by the Blues Executive Committee. If the investigation determines that a violation has occurred, the Blues within their sole discretion, will impose an appropriate discipline.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, the loss or suspension of certain or all privileges connected with the Blues and/or including the opportunity to participate in other hockey-related activities. Such discipline may include the removal or ban from an arena, games, practices, and other team activities.

Inappropriate communications made by any participant or member are considered a violation of this policy and may be subject to disciplinary action. Because social media infractions may vary in terms of their seriousness and effect, care must be taken to consider sanctions that are appropriate in each situation that presents itself. That is not to say that these types of situations are minor, but rather, some may be more serious than others.

Factors that can be considered when dealing with social media violations may include, but are not limited to: the nature of the infraction (emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, hazing etc.); the intent of the responsible party or parties; whether physical or other harm resulted; the circumstances surrounding the infraction; the effect upon its recipient(s); the recipient's family; the team; the Association or the community; and any previous social media violation history.