

WYHA Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy

As part of WYHA's emphasis on participant safety, communications involving our youth players should be appropriate, productive, and transparent. Effective communication concerning travel, practice or game schedules, and administrative issues among administrators, coaches, players and their families is critical. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media, 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 participants. The improper use of mobile and electronic communications can result in misconduct. Adherence to a policy for mobile and electronic communication reduces these risks.

All electronic communications 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 readily available to share with the public or families of the player or coach. If the player is under the age of 18, any e-mail, electronic text, social media, or similar communication **must** also copy or include the player's parents.

Social Media (For example, but not limited to Instagram, Facebook, MySpace, Blogs and Similar Sites)

- Social media make it easy to share ideas and experiences. WYHA recognizes, however, that social media, mobile and other electronic communications can be especially concerning where youth participants are involved.
- Coaches are prohibited from having players joined to their personal social media page or any other similar social media application.
- 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 players through the site. All electronic communication of any kind between coach and player, including the use of social media, must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team oriented motivational purposes.

E-Mail, Text Messaging and Similar Electronic Communications

- Coaches, team managers and players may use e-mail and text messaging to communicate. All e-mail and text message content between coaches/team managers and player must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.
- E-Mail and text messages from a coach to any youth player **must** include a copy to parents.
- Where possible, a coach should be provided and use the organization web site e-mail center (the coach's return email address will contain @organization.com) for all communications with the team and players.

Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications or Imagery with Athlete

Following receipt of a written request by the parents or legal guardians of a youth player that their child not be contacted by any form of electronic communication by coaches or other adults, the association, team and coaches and administrators shall immediately comply with such request without any repercussions for such request.

Abuse and Misconduct

Social media and other means of electronic communications can be used to commit abuse and misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by any coaches, team managers, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of USA Hockey's SafeSport Program.

Reporting

- Infractions of WYHA's Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy should be reported to WYHA's SafeSport Coordinator. See Section IV of the SafeSport Handbook for more information concerning reporting.
- A WYHA participant or parent of a participant who violates this Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, permanent suspension and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.

Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

WYHA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, parents, employees or volunteers in WYHA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of the Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. To report any actual or suspected violations, you may email USA Hockey at SafeSport@usahockey.org or may call 1-800-888-4656.

WYHA's Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policies will follow policies that may be issued by Minnesota District 3 Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and/or USA Hockey.