



# Social Media Policy

## Applicability

This policy provides advice and guidelines for members of the Ringette Association of Burlington (RAB), including team staff, players, parents and volunteers, who use electronic mediums of communication and social media platforms.

To prevent and avoid online postings that may conflict with the interests of RAB and its Members, RAB has adopted the following Social Media Policy.

## Jurisdiction

This policy is applicable to the business, activities or events (including games, practices and social events) organized by RAB which includes all members and participants.

## Guidelines

It is everyone's responsibility to follow proper procedures both in the arena and on the online.

Coaches, volunteers and others in a position of trust in Ringette need to act responsibly, which also includes the use of electronic communications. Coaches and those in a position of responsibility must ensure they communicate responsibly.

## Everyone using any social media platform should:

- *Think about content before posting.* Although content can be removed from a platform once posted online, its online presence may persist even though the post has been deleted.
- *Maintain a positive social media presence.* Negative behavior and comments reflect badly on you and could impact the reputation of the RAB.

- *Write in the first person.* This ensures that any content posted is being expressed from your personal opinions and not those of the RAB.
- *Obtain parental permissions* (if applicable). Players aged 17 years and younger must obtain permission from parents to post photographs and/or names to social media sites.

**Everyone using any social media platform shall NOT:**

- *Publish negative comments.* Whether those comments are aimed towards RAB, other associations, teams, players or referees, or any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects or incidents that may have occurred, negative comments are inappropriate in all instances.
- *Use harassing, hostile or derogatory language.* This stands for any online communications.
- *Respond to any inaccurate or negative comments about your association, team, player or anyone involved with your association.* In order to avoid escalation, do not engage in an open debate about these comments. Please contact Ringette Ontario for advice.
- *Use copyrighted information without citations and links.* When publishing either exact or paraphrased text, photos or videos, give credit to the author or publisher. Never use trademarks, slogans, logos, etc.. without obtaining permission from the copyright owner.

**Teams, players and volunteers**

Many teams, players and volunteers create websites, including social media pages, on one of the many hosting sites to assist with efficient communications to members. Although many players 17 years of age and younger will have their own email address, all communications must also be sent to the parent's email.

- No adult should communicate one on one with a player 17 years of age or younger. Players 17 years of age or younger should be encouraged by their coaches and parents to inform an adult they trust if they receive any communications that make them feel uncomfortable or if anyone has told them not to tell anyone about a communication.

**Coaches**

A large percentage of Ringette Ontario coaches deal with children who are under 18 years of age. There are many coaches in training that are also under 18. Extra care must be taken with this age group to avoid even an appearance of improper conduct.

Unless a player/coach 17 years or younger is a direct relation, the coaches, managers and trainers should not:

- Accept anyone as a friend on social networking sites, or share their personal social web pages with anyone under 18.
- Send personal messages of a non-Ringette nature to anyone under 18.
- Engage in any personal conversations or social comments.

## **Enforcement**

RAB Committee Members shall have the authority to remove any inappropriate or offensive comments from official RAB sites and/or social media platforms. RAB may also block any individual or organization from posting on any official RAB social media platform if they determine, in their sole discretion, that such removal or block is in the best interests of the association.

Failure to adhere to this policy may involve may result in a warning or possible disciplinary action, including:

- Committee Members: Suspension or permanent removal from committee.
- Players: Game suspensions.
- Coaches: Suspension for the current season, removal of evaluation responsibilities and/or permanent suspension.
- Parents/Volunteers: Temporary or permanent suspension of attendance at any event/game.

Any questions on the RAB social media policy or any incident related to it should be directed via email to the following RAB Committee Members: the President, Vice President 1, Vice President 2 and cc the Social Media Representative.

*Reviewed and revised June 2023.*