

Policy Category	Governance
Policy Name	CDMFA Communications & Public Relations
Source	Rugby Alberta, Community Literacy of Ontario, ViaSport British Columbia, Edmonton Sport Council, GSACRD Administrative Procedure 140
Date	Approved 2023-03
Reference	CDMFA Code of Conduct

1. Communications Policy

It is the policy of CDMFA to:

- 1.1. Provide the membership with timely, accurate, intelligible and complete information about CDMFA policies, programs, services and initiatives;
- 1.2. Employ a variety of methods and channels to effectively communicate CDMFA information, utilizing a mix of traditional methods and new technologies, reflecting the diversity within the CDMFA Community and continuous change in technology and multimedia;
- 1.3. Deliver prompt, courteous and responsive service to all in the spirit of CDMFA;
- 1.4. Protect minors from inappropriate communications from CDMFA and cyber-bullying through CDMFA communications channels;
- 1.5. Respect the privacy of its members and stakeholders in compliance with Alberta's Freedom of Informations & Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act.

Policy Implementation

- 1.6. CDMFA will invest in the development and maintenance of a high-functioning and accessible website and may make use of an e-marketing service while maintaining a presence on popular social media platforms;
- 1.7. CDMFA will strive to ensure that gender is portrayed fairly in promotional materials and official publications, that ethnic minority groups are represented and that appropriate language is used in all communications.
- 1.8. CDMFA will utilize built-in analytics to measure the effectiveness of CDMFA's Communications Plan and the effectiveness of CDMFA's website, social media channels and e-marketing service;
- 1.9. CDMFA staff and Board of Directors will regularly connect with Member and Associate Member leadership to facilitate greater understanding and feedback on CDMFA's policies, programs, services and initiatives;
- 1.10. CDMFA will regularly monitor CDMFA social media platforms for abusive or disrespectful behaviour; when communicating with minors, CDMFA will endeavour to limit communication to written format and restrict access to any minor's contact details to relevant personnel who have a current Criminal Record Check and have signed a Non-disclosure Agreement with CDMFA.

- 1.11. CDMFA will maintain member and stakeholder contact details through the e-marketing service provider, allowing members and stakeholder to manage their personal data, unsubscribe and update preferences at any time.

2. Communications Plan

Expectations for the CDMFA Communications Committee, and guidelines to help member clubs to help prepare their Board and their own volunteers for the responsibilities of communications.

This document provides information on the public relations needs and priorities of the association; itemizing who should be involved in the plan, as well as the components of the plan. This plan should be reviewed and revised on an annual basis.

- 2.1. Elements of the CDMFA Communications Plan should include: (and it is recommended each member club have a similar communications plan to facilitate promotions for their own purposes, and supporting the initiatives of the CDMFA and its business partners)
 - 2.1.1. Goals and objectives
 - 2.1.2. Statement of philosophy
 - 2.1.3. SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
 - 2.1.4. Audiences
 - 2.1.5. Key messages (customized to the audiences)
 - 2.1.6. Strategies
 - 2.1.7. Tools and tactics (resources)
 - 2.1.8. Structures and processes ... how will it be implemented/maintained
 - 2.1.9. Roles and responsibilities ... who is responsible for each task
 - 2.1.10. Formats and templates ... established/updated for the season/campaign
 - 2.1.11. Timelines
 - 2.1.12. Budget ... Do we need to reallocate funds?

3. Crisis Communications Plan

- 3.1. It is imperative to drive the media agenda with your facts before others usurp public perception or speculation gets out of control. The Association needs to be prepared in order to feed the media's appetite for information.
- 3.2. Designate a spokesperson(s). Assign one person to coordinate with the media and outside audiences. You may have another individual speak to the media as an expert but always coordinate your efforts so that conflicting statements are minimized.
- 3.3. Identify roles and responsibilities. Assign individuals roles and tasks for a response in a crisis. This will minimize the disruption to daily operations. You may also want to create a team to coordinate efforts.
- 3.4. Determine what tools you will use. This will depend on many factors like who your audience is and what is the most efficient means of getting your message out. Develop both a system for internal and external audiences.

- 3.5. Develop media kits. Use information that is already available (in a crisis, you don't have time to create new information pieces).

4. Media Relations

- 4.1. Designate a contact for media calls and inquiries. It may be necessary to refer the call or set up a secondary contact, but do so only after the secondary contact has consented to participating and sharing their personal contact information.
- 4.2. Best practices for media relations
 - 4.2.1. Reporters are not your "friends" when creating a story.
 - 4.2.2. There is no such thing as "off the record". Be aware that many reporters record telephone conversations for accuracy, quotes, etc.
 - 4.2.3. You do not have to do an interview when a reporter calls you. It is okay to ask about the topic and take time to gather your thoughts and relevant facts before making a statement.
 - 4.2.4. Respect deadlines. If you say you will respond by a certain time, do so.
 - 4.2.5. Develop three or four key points that you want to convey.
 - 4.2.6. Be conscious of other relevant organizational messages. (Has anyone else already spoken to the public?)
 - 4.2.7. Ensure that the topic you think you are discussing is actually what the reporter thinks you are discussing.
 - 4.2.8. You do not have to answer a question as it was phrased. You can reframe questions and respond in a way that allows you to get YOUR message across.
 - 4.2.9. If the question is not clear, or if you need a minute to think, ask the reporter to repeat the question.
 - 4.2.10. Do not go too far in answering a question. Stick to the key points.
 - 4.2.11. Be credible, sincere and confident in your information. If you are not the right person to answer, or do not have the right information, tell the reporter that you will provide them with an appropriate contact, or offer to provide them with the information later.
 - 4.2.12. Be friendly, courteous and tactful, especially if you need to correct a fact.
 - 4.2.13. If you make a factual error, go back and correct your mistake.
 - 4.2.14. Your statements may be seen as a commitment on behalf of your organization.
 - 4.2.15. Ensure that you stick to your area of responsibility.
 - 4.2.16. Avoid jargon or buzzwords - the reporter may not understand you, and the public may not know what you are talking about.

5. News Releases and Advisories

There are many reasons for issuing a news release and many types of news releases. For your news release to get noticed, it must be about something the media and the public are interested in.

- 5.1. News Release Checklist: (for CDMFA Directors and member clubs)
 - 5.1.1. Is the lead direct and to the point? Does it contain the most important and most interesting aspects of the story?
 - 5.1.2. Has the local angle been emphasized?
 - 5.1.3. Have the pertinent facts been relayed in the first few paragraphs?

Who
What
When
Where
Why

- 5.1.4. Are sentences short, concise? Paragraphs short? Words common and concrete?
- 5.1.5. Has editorial comment been placed in quotation marks and attributed to the appropriate person?
- 5.1.6. Are quotations natural? Do they sound as though they were spoken?
- 5.1.7. Has “Canadian Press Style” been followed throughout the release?
- 5.1.8. Are spelling and punctuation correct?
- 5.1.9. Have all statements of fact been double-checked for accuracy?
- 5.1.10. Is the release dated?
- 5.1.11. Are names, phone numbers and email addresses for further information included?
- 5.1.12. Ask for quotes from the appropriate representatives. Quotes from those involved will add more interest to the news release.
- 5.2. Press Releases and News Events originating with clubs
 - 5.2.1. It is recommended that CDMFA Board or staff members be made aware of all media events (good or bad).
 - 5.2.2. CDMFA can provide guidance on how to prepare press releases and contact information for sharing.
 - 5.2.3. CDMFA can provide additional support as required by the situation, and can provide necessary background information and partnership links where applicable.

6. Social Media Policy

This document establishes a policy for staff and volunteer use of social media. The use of social media technology follows the same standards of professional practice and conduct as are already practiced by our organization, including existing confidentiality and harassment policies. This policy would apply to all CDMFA operated social media channels, as well as those of member clubs and teams.

- 6.1. Social media means the online technologies and practices that are used to share information and opinions and build relationships. It can involve a variety of formats, including text, pictures, video, audio and real-time dialogues. It includes, but is not limited to, such things as social networks, discussion forums, blogs, wikis, and podcasts.
- 6.2. This agreement applies to
 - 6.2.1. All staff whether part-time, full-time, temporary, and contractors for service
 - 6.2.2. Volunteers working in the organization
- 6.3. Posting Material
 - 6.3.1. All material and links published on CDMFA social media should be appropriate to the CDMFA environment and represent the mission, vision and values.

- 6.3.2. Such material can be posted only by those given the authority to do so by the CDMFA Board of Directors
- 6.3.3. Any employee or volunteer who brings CDMFA into disrepute on any social media platform could be subject to disciplinary action
- 6.3.4. Senior management will be responsible for ensuring that social media services initiated by and/or created by and within the control of the CDMFA are moderated, and to ensure the timely removal of any defamatory or objectionable submissions. The reasons for content deletion will be stated.
- 6.3.5. All employees and volunteers should recognize that anything posted on the internet is permanent. Even if you attempt to delete the post, photo, comment, etc, it is likely that it has been stored in any number of other places. Context posted to the internet should be thought of as permanent.
- 6.4. Personal Media Space
CMDFA employees and volunteers should recognize that what they publish on the internet may reflect on their employer. Employees and volunteers who use social media for personal purposes should:
 - 6.4.1. Use a disclaimer anywhere there may be uncertainty about the capacity in which they are acting. A disclaimer, such as “The postings on this site are my own and do not represent the views or opinions of CDMFA” can help protect you.
 - 6.4.2. Avoid sharing CDMFA material in your personal space. Try to keep your personal online presence and your CDMFA online presence separate.
 - 6.4.3. Recognize that if you publish inappropriate comments that reflect badly on CDMFA in your personal space, on your personal time, that disciplinary action could follow.
- 6.5. CDMFA considers the following types of postings by members or others on any of our social media sites to be unacceptable:
 - 6.5.1. Defamatory or offensive postings, including swear words or verbal abuse
 - 6.5.2. Postings that are racist or sexist in nature, or are in violation of human rights
 - 6.5.3. Postings that are against the spirit of the Universal Code of Conduct
 - 6.5.4. Postings that are politically partisan or sectarian in nature
 - 6.5.5. Postings from external individuals or organizations that are intended to solicit business for an external individual or company
 - 6.5.6. Spam comments
 - 6.5.7. Such comments will be removed from our social media accounts
 - 6.5.8. Repeat offenders will be warned and, if necessary, banned from our social media accounts

7. Safety for Minors

- 7.1. In the USA, online distribution of photos of children is governed by the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998. Such specific regulations do not currently exist in Canada. Most Canadian laws surrounding online privacy target commercial enterprises, but lawmakers recommend that all organizations follow similar guidelines around using the images of children.

- 7.1.1. Get explicit permission from the parent or guardian before posting a photo of a child online, since some children in foster care or who are involved in a custody situation may be legally prohibited from appearing on social media.
- 7.1.2. Ensure that the photo doesn't contain any identifying information like a school sweatshirt or a recognizable landmark (like a school);
- 7.1.3. Keep all photos featuring children who cannot be shown on social media in a special folder so that they do not accidentally end up online
- 7.1.4. Do not tag children in social media photos
- 7.1.5. Do not reveal a child's name in social media photos
- 7.1.6. Favour group shots over close-up shots

8. Privacy and Contact Information

- 8.1. The organization should always provide a barrier between members and the general public online. While it's obviously not possible to prevent a determined person from finding members' information through other channels, one layer of separation should be provided between members and the general public in all social media communications.
 - 8.1.1. Do not use personal emails or contact information; create and use emails and contact information specific to the club or organization.
 - 8.1.2. Do not share or release personal emails or contact information to another member or member of the public. Instead take down the information of the person making the inquiry and pass it along.
 - 8.1.3. Some examples would be: "Ask a Coach," "Ask an Official," or a request to submit information. These should all be directed through the organization's website or email and not to a personal email.

9. Digital Citizenship & Responsibilities for All Members

- 9.1. Use public interactive websites in a safe manner and pay particular attention to guarding privacy, protecting identity (by not posting personal information), demonstrating etiquette, and communicating in a respectful, kind and compassionate manner.
- 9.2. NOT submit, post, publish, send or display obscene, profane, threatening, illegal and/or other inappropriate material via phones or on the internet.
- 9.3. NOT photograph or record others without their consent (in person and online interactions).
- 9.4. NOT attempt to access data or programs contained on systems without authorization or consent.
- 9.5. NOT read another user's email unless authorized to do so by the owner of the email account.
- 9.6. Agree to keeping personal passwords private & confidential.
- 9.7. Agree to take precautionary measures to protect devices from unauthorized access.
- 9.8. Adhere to copyright laws regarding the duplication or replication of other people's work, artwork, and logos.
- 9.9. Report instances of inappropriate, objectionable and/or offensive material to a coach, manager, or Board Member.
- 9.10. Upon graduation or termination from CDMFA clubs or Board positions, all passwords to emails, websites, and social media accounts will be surrendered. Members and staff will not gain access to these virtual files, accounts, or data after departure.

10. Use of Logos, Trademarks, and Copyrighted Material

10.1. CDMFA Logos

- 10.1.1. CDMFA members in good standing may use the CDMFA for the purposes of promoting recruitment, registration and participation in CDMFA programs and events, or events sanctioned or approved by CDMFA.
- 10.1.2. CDMFA logos must not be altered or modified without written permission from CDMFA staff.

10.2. CDMFA Member logos

- 10.2.1. CDMFA members in good standing may use the logos of other CDMFA members for the purposes of promoting recruitment, registration and participation in CDMFA programs and events, or events sanctioned or approved by CDMFA.
- 10.2.2. CDMFA member logos, club or team graphics, must not be altered or modified without the written permission of the Board of the respective club in question.

10.3. Edmonton Elks Logos

- 10.3.1. Edmonton Elks graphics are trademarked and may not be altered or modified in any way.
- 10.3.2. Graphics and logos used for the purposes of promoting Edmonton Elks events with CDMFA will be provided by the CDMFA Board or staff member.
- 10.3.3. Clubs/teams who wish to modify the Edmonton Elks logo for any event or activity not sanctioned or approved by CDMFA must acquire permission directly from the Edmonton Elks.

A useful resource for members and Board who want to learn more about social media standards and etiquette : Social Media Toolkit: <https://www.viasport.ca/resources/social-media-toolkit>