



Communications Procedure

Type: Procedure

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Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure all communication from the Huntsville Girls Hockey Association is delivered in a professional, consistent, and accountable manner.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Huntsville Girls Hockey Association Board of Directors, team staff, and volunteers performing duties as assigned by the Board.

Definitions

- **HGHA:** Huntsville Girls Hockey Association
- **OWHA:** Ontario Women's Hockey Association
- **Communication:** The transmission of information using a variety of mediums including, but not limited to, written, verbal, bodily actions and behaviours.
- **Mass Communication:** The transmission of information to a large audience including, but not limited to, social media posts and activities, HGHA website content including events, news articles, and announcements, and any communication directed to more than one specific team. (i.e. a social media post looking for volunteers). Individual team social media accounts are excluded from this definition.
- **Board-Sanctioned Mass Communication:** A specific type of mass communication which is explicitly intended to appear as a communication sent by the HGHA Directors as a whole, or on behalf of the HGHA Directors. (i.e. an email or letter signed from "The HGHA Board Members".)
- **Team-Spirit Mass Communication:** mass communication intended to promote team spirit, highlight achievements, and foster encouragement.
- **Automated System Emails:** Emails automatically generated by systems i.e. as a result of RAMP events, news articles, etc, where the creation of the action in RAMP has an option to "Send Email on Submit".

- **Consensus:** Agreement by the voting majority of the HGHA Board Members without a formal motion.

Nature of Communication

All communication shall be professional, delivered fairly, responsibly, and in a respectful and polite manner, in accordance with both the OWHA and HGHA codes of conduct, rules, policies and by-laws.

Failure to maintain respectful decorum may result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the HGHA Board as per the HGHA policies and by-laws.

All parties are authorized to communicate as necessary in accordance with performing their duties and responsibilities, provided the communication does not fall under the category of “mass communication”.

Mass Communication

Electronic, written or verbal mass communication may be delivered by any Director in accordance with performing their duties and responsibilities.

Mass communications require the initiator to notify all Directors of the context of the mass communication prior to release of this information. Explicit approval from the Directors is not required. The communication must not appear to have been delivered on behalf of the HGHA Board of Directors.

For example, the Communications Director may send a message to the Directors that a website news article about an upcoming event is going to be published.

The Communications Director does not need to notify all Directors prior to posting **team-spirit mass communication social media posts**. These posts would include:

- Repetitive or regularly scheduled posts intended to drum up support such as posting the upcoming weekend or tournament schedule.
- Highlighting team or player achievements.
- Posts intended to increase team spirit or promote encouragement.
- Team-provided social media content.

Board-sanctioned mass communication requires approval via consensus from the Directors. The initiator shall compose the communication and distribute to the Directors for consensus prior to release of this information. This communication must be signed or delivered on behalf of the HGHA Board of Directors.

For example, the Registrar may compose an email announcing an important upcoming event which will be signed from the HGHA Board of Directors. This email will be composed, sent to the Directors for approval, and then issued once approved.

Email – Protocol

All emails originating from the huntsvillegha.ca domain, except for automated system emails, which are sent to members or third parties shall contain an email signature which clearly identifies at a minimum:

- The sending party name
- The sender role in the HGHA
- The association name

For example:

John Doe

Treasurer

Huntsville Girls Hockey Association

The email signature may include the Huntsville Sting logo, provided it is used in accordance with the logo guidelines.

The email signature should not be repeated within an email string.

Email subject lines shall be descriptive, concise, and include the team name or division as appropriate.

Wherever possible, links to documents should be sent rather than attaching copies of files.

Directors must not use personal email accounts to conduct any HGHA business or transmit any HGHA communication.

Email - “Named” Accounts

Each Director shall be assigned a huntsvillegha.ca “named” user account structured as:

firstname.lastname@huntsvillegha.ca

For example: John.Doe@huntsvillegha.ca

The named user account acts as the user identification (username) which the Director uses to log in and access the tools available to the Board, such as Outlook, Word, Excel, SharePoint etc.

The named user email account shall be used for **internal communications** with other “huntsvillehgha.ca” emails only (internal email communications).

Emails are not to be sent from the named user email account to any external parties.

External parties do not have the ability to send emails to a named user email address.

Once a Director leaves the HGHA, the named user account shall be immediately deactivated.

Email - “Shared” Accounts

Each designated role within the HGHA shall have a shared mailbox structured as:

Role.Name@huntsvillehgha.ca

For example: Treasurer@huntsvillehgha.ca

Multiple Directors can have access to a shared mailbox.

Directors assigned to multiple roles will have access to multiple shared mailboxes.

The shared mailboxes are to be used for formal communication and to communicate with external parties. All emails to and from the shared mailboxes form the official record of each HGHA role.

Email - “Volunteer Position” Accounts

Parties performing duties at the direction of the Board (a Tournament Chair, for example), may be assigned access to a shared mailbox in accordance with the role.

Any email communication by the party performing such duties shall be sent to and from the shared mailbox, and not from a personal email address.

Email - System Archive

All communications to and from the **shared mailboxes** form the official historical record of the HGHA, and as such, are copied automatically into a system archive.

The system archive cannot be accessed by any Director or volunteer on a regular basis. The system archive can be unlocked by the technical support volunteer (help desk).

Should a Director require access to review the system archive:

1. A request for access to the archive must come as a directive of the Board and must be minuted.
2. The technical support volunteer will open access to the system archive in person with at least two members of the Board present.
3. The technical support volunteer will use search tools to isolate requests for information.

System Archive emails are not to be deleted until such time that storage space becomes an issue. At the direction of the Board, the technical support volunteer may be directed to delete specific years of emails due to space constraints, if all records have met the appropriate legal and financial retention requirements.

HGHA Social Media

The Communications Director or their designee shall be responsible for managing the HGHA social media accounts:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/huntsvillegirlshockey>
- Instagram: @huntsville_girls_hockey

Team-Supplied Content

To foster team spirit, encouragement, and promote achievements, each team must designate one member responsible for providing photos and team-related social media content to the Communications Director. Content description shall be supplied to the Director exactly how the member responsible wants it written on social media.

The content may be edited to adhere to HGHA and league policies at the Director's discretion.

Teams shall be allotted 1-2 posts per week, scheduled at the Communications Director's discretion.

It is the designated member's responsibility to ensure that no content be forwarded to the Communications Director for any player who has not consented to the use of images or videos via the media release form.

Team Social Media

Individual teams may manage their own team social media accounts. Each team must designate one member responsible for managing the content on the accounts. Individual team social media are not subject to the rules pertaining to mass communications.

It is the designated member's responsibility to ensure that any social media content is appropriate and adheres to both the OWHA and HGHA codes of conduct, rules, policies and by-laws.

It is the designated member's responsibility to ensure that no social media content be posted for any player who has not consented to the use of images or videos via the media release form.

HGHA Website

Changes and updates to the HGHA website may be made by:

- The Registrar, or their designee.
- The Communications Director, or their designee.
- The Secretary, or their designee.
- The technical support volunteer.

Changes and Updates

Website changes, updates and announcements fall under the category of mass communication and as such, the initiator shall give Board members notice of the context of the changes in advance.

Major changes to menu structures (addition, deletion, relocation) and content pages (page relocation, addition, deletion, or complete re-write) require consensus from the Board prior to implementation.

Detailed instructions on website management can be found in *Appendix A*.

Sponsorship

Any social media or HGHA website advertisements, notifications or postings with respect to association sponsors must be presented on a tiered structure in accordance with the sponsorship package purchased. The Sponsorship Director shall confirm required social media or website recognition requirements.

Existing social media or HGHA website recognitions shall be removed upon the close of the season.

Appendix A

Website Content Management

File Storage

Any files uploaded to the website file manager shall be organized in the following manner:

- Files and photos appearing on a specific content page shall be uploaded to *Files/Content Page* in the appropriate content page folder.
 - Outdated or replaced files should be removed from the appropriate content page folder when no longer in use.
- Files and photos appearing on a news article shall be uploaded under *Files/News Articles*.
 - Once a news article has expired, been archived or been deleted, the associated file or photo shall be removed from *Files/News Articles*.
- Photos which will be used on a repeated basis throughout the website shall be saved under *Images/Stock Photos*.
 - These stock photos do not need to be copied into other locations when in use.
- Board Minutes and Reports shall be uploaded under *Files/Board Minutes and Reports* in the appropriate year subfolder folder.

The website file manager is not to be used for long-term storage of important historical records.

Hat Trick Banners

These 3 banners appear on the home page above the quick links and should be used to link to the 3 most requested or sought-after information/topics on the site (i.e. Registration).

Quick Links

Quick links appear directly below the Hat Trick Banners on the home page and should be used to link to the 4-9 next requested or sought-after information/topics on the site. A maximum of 6 quick links can be defined.

Side Line Banners

These banners appear on all content pages on the right-hand side. As only 3 banners can be activated at any one time, side line banners should not be used for association sponsor recognition.

Ad Rotator and Carousel Ads

The Ad Rotator appears on all content pages on the right-hand side and can scroll through a large number of ads.

Carousel Ads also scroll through a large number of ads, however they appear on the home page only at the bottom of the page under the quicklinks.

The same content should not be used for both the Ad Rotator and Carousel Ads. i.e The Ad Rotator could be used for Platinum sponsors and the Carousel Ads for Gold sponsors.

News Articles

News Articles are relatively temporary in nature, and an auto archive date should be defined for each article wherever possible.

“Featured” Articles appear on the home page within a rotating image carousel. Articles which most members will be interested or require notice of should be marked as “feature” articles.

Repetitive or articles which most members will take less interest in do not need to be marked as “featured” and these will appear in the “news” list on the left-hand side of the home page. A repetitive article is a notice which appears on a regular basis such as “The monthly minutes from the last board meeting are now posted”.

Consideration should be made to “Hide Feature Image on Article Page” where the news article is utilizing a stock image which has no direct bearing on the article content. When the user clicks the news article, the image will not be repeated on the article page, and this will improve the readability for the end user.

If “Send Email on Submit” is selected, an email of the news article content will be sent to all Association Members who are associated with a current team.

Events

Events can be defined as association-wide, limited to a specific division (i.e. House League teams), or limited to a specific team.

If “Send Email on Submit” is selected, an email of the event details will be sent to all Association Members who are associated with a current team.

Executives

The executives page will be used to:

- List the current board members names and email addresses.
- Provide a brief description of when each board member should be contacted.
- Provide a photo of the board member, if desired.
- Advise the association membership of the help desk email for technical inquiries.

If a board member has been assigned multiple roles, there is no need to post their photo next to each subsequent role.

Volunteers

The volunteer section can be used for non-team specific volunteer requests. For example, during the HGHA tournament, volunteer signups can be created which can be accessed by any association member and aid the organizers in tracking and ensuring slots are fulfilled.

