



## **PEI Soccer Association**

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# **Social Media Policy & Guidelines**

## **POLICY**

### **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of a social media policy is to outline proper usage for social media and its associated risk.

### **2.0 Application of Policy**

This policy applies to all social media communication of the PEI Soccer Association(PEI Soccer) and its Members.

### **3.0 Definitions**

“Social media” is an umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technologies and social interaction online. People use social media to produce, post, share, collaborate or network using text, photos, video, audio, tags, podcasts, real-time dialogue, blogs, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter and other tools. For the purposes of this policy, social media may include PEISA sites or third party providers.

### **4.0 Policy Statement**

#### **PEI Soccer Association Use of social Media**

4.1 PEI Soccer supports the use of social media for strategic communications and engagement purposes with its members and stakeholders.

#### **Employee Use of Social Media – as authorized spokesperson**

4.2 Employee participation in social media should be guided by similar processes to dealing with media inquiries. Social media, like any other form of communication, must meet tests of acceptable use, credibility, privacy, authority and accountability and be staffed appropriately.

#### **Employee Use of Social Media – as administrator and/or private citizen**

4.3 Employees should be mindful of blurring their personal and professional lives when administering social media sites. Employees may not represent the PEI Soccer or its affiliates using their own personal social media

channels. PEI Soccer employees must not disclose any PEI Soccer information or content they are not specifically authorized to disclose.

Even if you are posting on a personal social media site, the public will associate you with the organization you work for or represent and therefore you'll be viewed as speaking on behalf of them. Therefore be extremely mindful of what you are saying and about whom.

Never post or comment on discipline issues, legal issues, media related issues or potential crisis issues without authorization to do so.

#### **Club Board Members, Team Staff, Players & Volunteers Use of Social Media**

4.4 Social media is an invaluable communications tool to help drive and promote soccer in Prince Edward Island. If social media is not used in an appropriate and respectful way, it may give rise to complaints from individuals or organization alleging violations of relevant PEI Soccer Rules and Regulations and Policies, including complaints that individuals are not acting in the best interest of the game of soccer or are demonstrating unethical (ungentlemanly) conduct and or behavior.

If complaints are brought to the attention of the PEI Soccer and, following applicable disciplinary procedures, inappropriate behavior is proven and depending on the severity of the incident, a number of sanctions are available ranging from formal warnings to suspensions from all soccer related activities.

Actions that the PEI Soccer deem inappropriate include but are not limited to:

- Comments that bring the game into disrepute or are ungentlemanly
- Abuse of individuals by means of racist, sexist or ageist comments
- Abuse of individuals by means of insult or threat
- Abuse of players or officials in comments that are deemed personally insulting or damaging

## **5.0 Enforcement**

Failure to adhere to this Policy may permit discipline in accordance with the Rules and Regulations or termination of employment/volunteer position.

# **GUIDELINES**

The policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by volunteers, employees and Members of the PEI Soccer Association. For the purposes of the policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wiki's, social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the internet.

Association volunteers, employees and Members are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. PEI Soccer employees are subject to this policy to the extent they identify themselves as an employee of PEI Soccer (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to PEI Soccer).

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that PEI Soccer must otherwise follow.

## **Don't Tell Secrets**

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details about our financial information, upcoming projects, membership, research, and trade secrets.

## **Protect your own privacy**

Privacy settings on social media platforms should be set to allow anyone to see profile information similar to what would be on the club website. Other privacy settings that might allow others to post information or see information that is personal should be set to limit access. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see.

## **Be Honest**

Do not blog anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are. Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. But also be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. What you publish will be around for a long time, so consider the content carefully and also be cautious about disclosing personal details.

## **Respect copyright laws**

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others; including the Association's own copyrights and brands. You should never quote more than short

excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

### **Respect your audience, the Association, and your colleagues**

The public in general, and PEI Soccer employees, volunteers and members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with our website. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but do so respectfully. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and of topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions expressed are yours alone and do not represent the official views of PEI Soccer.

### **Protect our customers, business partners and suppliers**

Members and partners should not be cited or obviously referenced without their approval. Never identify a member and partner by name without permission and never discuss confidential details of a customer engagement. It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for a customer (e.g., Customer 123) so long as the information provided does not violate any non-disclosure agreements that may be in place with the member or make it easy for someone to identify the member. Your blog is not the place to "conduct business" with a member or partner.

### **Controversial Issues**

If you see misrepresentations made about PEI Soccer in the media, you may point that out. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. Brawls may earn traffic, but nobody wins in the end. Don't try to settle scores or goad competitors or others into inflammatory debates. Make sure what you are saying is factually correct.

### **Be the first to respond to your own mistakes**

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of a legal action.

### **Think About Consequences**

For example, consider what might happen if a PEI Soccer Member is in a meeting with a member or partner, and someone on the customer's side pulls out a print-out of your blog and says "This person at PEI Soccer says that member sucks."

Saying "Project X needs to have an easier learning curve for the first-time user" is fine; saying "Project X sucks" is risky, unsubtle and amateurish.

Once again, it's all about judgment: using your blog to trash or embarrass PEI Soccer, our customers, or your co-workers, is dangerous and ill-advised.

## **Disclaimers**

Many social media users include a prominent disclaimer saying who they work for, but that they're not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but don't count on it to avoid trouble - it may not have much legal effect.

Wherever practical, you must use a disclaimer that states while you work or volunteer for the Association, anything you publish is your personal opinion, and not necessarily the opinions of PEI Soccer.

## **Don't forget your day job.**

Make sure that blogging does not interfere with your job or commitments to members.

## **Social Media Tips**

The following tips are not mandatory, but will contribute to successful use of social media.

- The best way to be interesting, stay out of trouble, and have fun is to write about what you know. There is a good chance of being embarrassed by a real expert, or of being boring if you write about topics you are not knowledgeable about.
- Quality matters. Use a spell-checker. If you're not design-oriented, ask someone who is whether your blog looks decent, and take their advice on how to improve it.
- The speed of being able to publish your thoughts is both a great feature and a great downfall of social media. The time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. If in doubt over a post, or if something does not feel right, either let it sit and look at it again before publishing it, or ask someone else to look at it first.

## **Enforcement**

Policy violations will be subject to PEI Soccer disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.