



SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKING & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Queen City United Soccer Club

www.qcsoccer.ca

Revised: May 1, 2023



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OVERVIEW

Preamble:

Social media networking and electronic communications have become prevalent in our world today. For many organizations, and the coaches and athletes within those organizations, it is becoming a primary method of communication. Social media networking tools, apps, and other electronic communications can be used to market programming, build community, reach new audiences, and communicate quickly, and as such have demonstrable value. However, it must be acknowledged these communications tools also come with associated risks when adults, particularly Persons in Authority, use these methods to communicate with minors.

This policy sets forth the expectations with respect to the use of all electronic and social media networking tools/apps, as well as other forms of electronic communications, by all Queen City United Soccer Club (QCUSC) coaches, athletes, parents, staff, volunteers, and administrators, including the Board of Directors.

Purpose:

Both on and off the field, professionalism, safety, and youth protection are integral to the successful operation and growth of our soccer community. QCUSC is committed to advocating for youth and keeping children and their privacy safe, both online and off, and safety must always be at the forefront of any considerations where any electronic communication or social media networking tools/apps are used.

Social media networking tools/apps are typically public, and electronic communications can also be shared publicly as well. Even when using these forms of communication for purely personal purposes, a person's public expressions could potentially affect their professional identities and the organizational interests of QCUSC.

QCUSC fully respects the interest our employees, contractors, and coaches may have in participating in electronic communications and social media networking on a personal basis. QCUSC does not have any authority over or role in an individual's personal use of social media networking tools or electronic communications. However, activities of QCUSC employees, contractors, and coaches outside of work that affect the organization's reputation, the employee's, contractor's or coach's job performance, the safety of our players, or other QCUSC personnel are within the scope of this policy. This QCUSC Social Media Networking and Electronic Communications policy is in alignment our Code of Conduct.

With these objectives in mind, all QCUSC staff, contractors, volunteers, administrators, and coaches must make themselves familiar with and adhere to this policy and must share this policy with parents and athletes as appropriate.



INTERNET AND COMMUNICATION POLICIES FOR COACHES

- Electronic communications between adults and minors should always be Transparent, Accessible and Professional.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered part of the Organization's records. Another coach or parent must be included in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a coach.

- Persons in Authority should only send electronic communications (ie: text messages) and/or emails to individual Athletes when necessary and only for communicating information related to team issues and activities (e.g., non-personal information). Any such texts, messages or emails shall be professional in tone. No Person in Authority should send direct messages via social media networking tools/apps.
- Electronic communication between Persons in Authority and Athletes that is personal in nature should be avoided. If such communication occurs, it must be recorded and available for review by another Person in Authority and/or by the Athlete's parent/guardian (when the Athlete is a Vulnerable Participant).
- QCUSC also recognizes not all athletes have access to cellphones and/or social media network/apps. As such, all club business and team information must be shared via club-approved methods.
- As per the QCUSC Code of Conduct Club Communication cannot purposely exclude the participation any athlete. As such, all club communications and team building/communication should go through club-approved methods and made available to all members. Currently, QCUSC uses TeamSnap and all communications should go through that APP. However, as technology changes, QCUSC reserves the right to employ new and/or more effective technologies.
- Coaches who have personal social media networking accounts cannot conduct any QCUSC business or duties through these tools/apps.
- As per our Guidelines for Appropriate Conduct Between Adults and Children, there should be no communication that is not directly tied to coaching, and/or is personal in nature. All communication should be tied to coaching and in response to meeting the child's needs.



- Coaches and team representatives should avoid cell phone conversations with players to the greatest extent possible, and cell phone communications should only be used when necessary and should only be soccer related.
- If QCUSC affiliated personnel post content on any social media networking tool/app it should be accompanied with the statement, "The postings on this site are my own, personal views and do not represent the views or positions of the Queen City United Soccer Club, its members, or personnel."
- Respect privacy and confidentiality obligations when posting photos or videos. Before you post online videos or photos that include images of athletes, it is your responsibility to obtain consent from their parent or guardian. If you fail to do so and they subsequently object, it is your responsibility to promptly take down or otherwise edit the posting to protect their privacy. QCUSC will fully support those who wish to maintain their privacy in this regard.

REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION OF SUSPICIOUS INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

- All issues related to electronic communications and social media networks/apps should be reported to the Technical Director and/or the Executive Director. Any reports of inappropriate activity will be reported to the QCUSC's Board of Directors, to contractual partners that require such information, and to the Saskatchewan Soccer Association.
- Reports of inappropriate activity may also be reported to law enforcement authorities and human services departments as appropriate.
- Pending the investigation of reported suspicious activity, the Executive Director may prohibit contact between a staff member, a coach, contractor or volunteer and all members of the club as deemed appropriate.
- Upon conclusion of the investigation, the Executive Director, acting on the advice of the Board of Directors, external counsel and/or Saskatchewan Soccer Association, shall decide regarding future participation of the individuals involved in club activities. In the event of suspension or termination of a staff member, contractor, coach or volunteer the Executive Director shall provide a means of appeal of the decision as required by the Saskatchewan Soccer Association, via ITP Sports.

All QCUSC personnel must comply with this policy. In the event QCUSC perceives any online and/or electronic communication activities by an employee, coach or volunteer as compromising the integrity of the organization or the safety of our members in any respect, QCUSC may request such communications to cease. Such communications may be reported to authorities if deemed appropriate by the Executive Director. Violations of this policy will result in corrective action including disciplinary action or dismissal when appropriate.



INTERNET SAFETY AND GUIDELINES FOR PLAYERS

- QCUSC encourages parents to be aware of their player(s) activities online.
- Parents are also required to be a member of your player's TeamSnap account so you can review all communication. This is applicable to all age groups.
- Do not give anyone online, not even your coach or other parent volunteers, your phone numbers at home or school, your parents' or guardians' workplaces, or the name or location of your school or home address unless you have your parents' or guardian's permission first. Never give your password to anyone but a parent or other adult in your family.
- Do not "friend" your coach on social media networks/apps.
- Do not participate in "one on one" conversation via email, text message, or telephone with your coach for anything other than soccer related business.
- Do not participate in "one on one" conversation via social media networks/apps with your coach/team manager or any other club personnel.
- If your coach or any other adult sends or shows you email or any type of direct message/wall post or text message with images or words that make you feel uncomfortable, do not respond. Tell a parent or trusted adult about the message or what happened.
- Tell a parent or guardian about any calls or texts you receive from a coach that discuss anything other than soccer related issues.
- If your coach or any other adult tells you to keep what is going on between the two of you secret, tell a parent or guardian immediately.
- Once a player is able, and their parent approves, they must join Team Snap for the purposes of team communication. It is an expectation that players will use the tools provided by the club, and approved of by their parents, for the purposes of communicating with coaching staff and other players.



- Be careful to whom you talk to on the Internet. If someone starts talking about subjects that make you feel uncomfortable, tell a parent or guardian. Keep in mind that a person you do not know who is trying to talk to you on the Internet could be an adult posing as a kid.
- Pay attention if someone tells you things that do not fit together. If one time an online “friend” says he or she is 12, and another time says he or she is 14. That is a warning that this person is lying and may be an adult posing as a kid.
- Unless you talk to a parent about it first, never talk to anybody by phone or text message if you know that person only online. If someone asks you to call—even if it is a collect or a toll-free, 800 number—that is a warning. That person can get your phone number this way, either from a phone bill or from caller ID.
- Never agree to meet someone, including a coach or QCUSC staff or volunteer, at any place off-line, unless you have a parent or guardian’s permission.

INTERNET SAFETY FOR PARENTS

Discuss online safety, and the “Internet Safety for Players,” section above, with your children.

- Let your children know that their coach, and other adults, should not communicate with them without your explicit knowledge and approval.
- Review your child’s online and electronic communications as appropriate to minimize risk. And be aware of all activities online.
- Report any suspicious online or electronic communications to the club Executive Director and/or the Technical as soon as possible.
- If appropriate, report any suspicious online or electronic communications to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible.