



Policies and Procedures of the Abbotsford Minor Hockey Association

P-3

Communication Policies

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Version 2.1

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1. Publication Policy

- 1.1. In order to protect the integrity of AMHA's youth program, it's officials, coaches, players and parents/guardians, no individual or group may represent AMHA's Directors, coaches, players or parents/guardians in any public medium without the expressed consent of the AMHA Board of Directors.
- 1.2. Additionally, no personal information of players, parents/guardians, or AMHA officials will be made public without the written consent of the interested parties.
- 1.3. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Print: Newspapers, magazines, and periodicals
 - Internet & Social Media
 - Television
 - Radio
- 1.4. All press releases shall be forwarded to the President for distribution. Teams will not submit press releases directly to the press.
- 1.5. AMHA is not responsible for any media, parent or team postings.
- 1.6. Violation of this policy can lead to disciplinary action and/or expulsion from AMHA.

2. Team Officials Communication Policy

- 2.1. The AMHA Team Officials Communication Policy has been developed to provide Team Officials guidelines for communicating with your team in today's day and age of rapid mobile communications. No policy can cover all forms of communication and therefore this policy is to provide recommended guidelines for Team Officials (both Parent and nonparent) in respect to communication with their teams. Team Officials should always abide by the "**Two-Deep**" method for all communications, whereby at least two rostered Team Officials and/or a parent is included in communications. Communications should only communicate messages about hockey, scheduling, conflicts, and logistics. With regards to electronic forms of communication the "Two-Deep" policy would result in, no private messages and no one-on-one direct contact through Facebook messages, Twitter direct messaging, Skype, or other instant messaging (including but not limited to Google Messenger, AIM, snapchat, and the like) or other similar messaging features provided through social media sites and communication platforms.

2.2. Specific Recommendations for Coaches (parent and nonparent)

2.2.1 Telephone - It is recommended that coaches should not engage in

telephone conversations with only a player. Any telephone conversation with a player should include a parent/guardian as part of the conversation.

- In certain situations it may be appropriate for players to communicate with coaches for informational purposes (i.e. player cannot make practice, player is sick, player has an injury, etc.). In this case it would be appropriate for a coach to confirm receipt of the communication, but not to engage in any conversation over the telephone. Conversations that require engagement should include a parent/guardian where appropriate.

2.2.2 Text Message - It is recommended that coaches do not communicate with players by text message and/or SMS message. In certain situations it may be appropriate for players to communicate with coaches for informational purposes only (i.e. player cannot make practice, player is sick). In this case it would be appropriate for a coach to confirm receipt of message, but not to engage in any conversation over the topic via text message.

2.2.3 Email - It is recommended that Coaches engage in email communications with players only when parents are included as part of the communication. For example, a coach may email a player when the parent/guardian has been copied on the email.

2.2.4 Social Media – There are many types of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, amongst others, and social media platforms change and new platforms are constantly being created. This policy is meant as a guideline for social media to assist Team Officials in the understanding of Social Media and is not inclusive of all social media platforms. As a general guideline, Team Officials should conduct themselves on Social Media in a manner that is positive and provides facts, not personal opinions. Slanderous comments may be subject to the AMHA Abuse and Harassment and/or Discipline Policies. To provide context, the following are examples with commonly known social media platforms.

2.2.4.1 Facebook - It is recommended that Coaches not be 'Friends' with any players on Facebook. It would be acceptable for a team to have a 'Facebook Group' for their team. Players, parents, coaches, and members of the AMHA Social Media committee are required to be members of such a group.

2.2.4.2 Twitter - Coaches should not communicate with any player via 'direct messaging'. Coaches should only tweet appropriate communications that provide information. Personal opinions should not be communicated on Twitter. If a team chooses to have a team Twitter handle, the Twitter handle must follow the AMHA Twitter handle. Upon completion of the season, the username and password for the team's Twitter handle must be provided to the AMHA social media committee.

2.2.4.3 Instagram - Coaches should not direct message with players via Instagram. Any communication via Instagram must remain public. If a coach is on Instagram, they must follow the AMHA's Instagram account.

2.2.4.4 Snapchat - Coaches should not communicate with players via snapchat as text messages, video chats. Coaches should not be sharing images via Snapchat with players.

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3.1. **Specific Recommendations for Managers**

- It is recommended that Team Managers communicate as much as possible with the Association's approved communication tool for communicating scheduling, logistics and communications to their team.
- When communicating via email team Managers should ensure parents are copied on any and all communications.
- Team managers should abide by the notes in the coaches communication recommendations for social media as much as possible.

3.2. **Specific Recommendations for Team Safety People (HCSP)**

- HCSP people should abide by the same guidelines as Coaches and Managers. Safety people should always abide by the "Two Deep" method when checking up on players (i.e. injuries). If Safety people are required to take players off the ice and to a dressing room, the Two Deep rule is required.
- Due to the potentially sensitive personal information and material Safety people should never communicate directly with a player where follow up situations are required. Wherever possible they should communicate with parents/guardians, and/or abide by the two-deep method at all times. At some ages inclusion of the player may be required, but only as long as the Parent/Guardian is included in the communication.

3.3. **Personal and Contact Information**

- All Team Officials are only permitted to share contact information within the team or for AMHA/league purposes. Team Officials are not permitted to share contact information with any source outside the AMHA. In some cases (i.e. Rep Teams) personal contact information may be required for scouting purposes. This contact information may only be shared by the Head Coach or Manager and not without written consent of the parent/guardian.

4. **Communication Policy Guidelines for Parents/Guardians/Supporters**

- 4.1. It is recommended that Parents/Guardians/Supporters follow the policies listed in section 1 and 2 of this Policy.

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- **Social Media Best Practices:**
 - Think twice before posting.
 - Be respectful and positive.
 - Remember, many different audiences view your posts including other members, fans, alumni, kids, local authorities, parents, etc.
 - The internet is permanent. Even if you delete something, it's still out there somewhere.
 - Be in the right state of mind when you make a post.
 - Do not post when your judgment is impaired.
 - Coaches and Administrators monitor social media websites.
 - Use the privacy/security settings made available on these sites.

 - **Breach of Social Media.** The AMHA has chosen to “embrace” social media rather than frown upon and/or ban it within our association. We embrace social media with the notion of respect and common sense (please see social media best practices listed in section 4.1). In the event the social media policy has been breached members will enter into the AMHA’s Abuse and Harassment, Discipline and/or Conflict Resolution Policy processes.
- 4.2. Parents/Guardians/Supporters found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to the AMHA Discipline or Abuse and Harassment policies.