

Burlington Hockey and Skating Association's Electronic Communications Policy

As part of Burlington Hockey and Skating Associations (BHSA) emphasis on safety, communications involving any participant, and especially our minor participants, should be appropriate, productive, and transparent. Effective communication concerning travel, practice or game schedules, and administrative issues among coaches, administrators, players and their families is critical. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media, and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for improprieties and misunderstandings and also provides potential offenders with unsupervised and potentially inappropriate access to participants. The improper use of social media, mobile and electronic communications can result in misconduct. Adherence to the Electronic Communications Policy helps reduce these risks.

All electronic communication between coach and player must be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Coaches, players and all team personnel must follow common sense guidelines regarding the volume and time of day of any allowed electronic communication. All content between coaches and players should be readily available to share with the public or families of the player or coach. If the player is under the age of 18, any email, text, social media, or similar communication **must** also copy or include the player's parents.

Social Media

Social media makes it easy to share ideas and experiences. BHSA recognizes, however, that social media, mobile and other electronic communications can be especially concerning where minor participants are involved. Coaches are prohibited from having players joined to or connected through their personal Facebook page or any other similar social media application. To facilitate communication, an official organization or team page may be set up and players and parents may join (i.e., "friend") the official organization or team page and coaches can communicate to players through that site. All electronic communication of any kind between coach and player, including use of social media, must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team oriented motivational purposes.

Email, Text Messaging and Similar Electronic Communications

Coaches, team managers and players may use email and text messaging to communicate. All email and text message content between coaches/team managers and players must be non-personal in nature and be for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. Emails and text messages from a coach to any minor participant **must** include a copy to the player's parents. Where possible, a coach should be provided and use the organization web site email center (the coach's return email address will contain "@organization.com") for all communications with the team, players, and player's parents, where applicable.

Request To Discontinue All Electronic Communications or Imagery with Athlete

Following receipt of a written request by the parents of a minor player that their child not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by coaches or other adults in the program, the local program, team, coaches and administrators shall immediately comply with such request without any repercussions for such request.

Abuse and Misconduct

Social media and other means of electronic communication can be used to commit abuse and misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications

by any employee, volunteer, independent contractor or other participant of a USA Hockey Member Program will not be tolerated and are considered violations of USA Hockey's SafeSport Program.

Prohibited Conduct and Reporting

BHSA prohibits all types of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, bullying, threats, harassment and hazing, all as described in the USA Hockey SafeSport Handbook. Participants, employees or volunteers in BHSA may be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these Electronic Communications Policies or for engaging in any misconduct or abuse or that violates the USA Hockey SafeSport Policies. Reports of any actual or suspected violations, you may email BHSA Safe Sport Coordinator, BHSA President and/or USA Hockey at SafeSport@usahockey.org or may call 1-800-888-4656.