

Social Media Policy

1.0 Definitions

The following terms have these meanings in this policy:

- a) **Athlete** – a Member who is registered in the OBC's Youth Program;
- b) **Code of Conduct** – OBC Policy #16 – Code of Conduct and Ethics;
- c) **Discipline and Complaints Policy** – OBC Policy #5 – Discipline and Complaints;
- d) **Inappropriate** – with respect to social media, any activity, comment or material that is disrespectful, hateful, harmful, disparaging, insulting, defamatory or otherwise negative;
- e) **Individual** – a person involved with OBC activities, including but not limited to Members, coaches, volunteers, directors, and administrators;
- f) **Member** – all members registered in the current year with the OBC, as provided for in the OBC's Bylaws;
- g) **Social media** – includes any form of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages and other content. These include, but are not limited to: Linked In, Facebook, Discord, blogs, micro-blogging (e.g., Twitter), Pinterest, Google plus, YouTube, Flickr, Snapchat, Tiktok and Instagram.

2.0 This policy provides Members with guidelines for the responsible use of social media.

3.0 The Ottawa Bicycle Club (OBC) recognizes that social media, when used in a responsible manner, can be an effective tool for positive communication among Members, coaches, volunteers and staff. Although the OBC recognizes the popularity and utility of social media, (including but not limited to networking, blogging and video blogging), appropriate conduct must be observed in order to protect Individuals, Members and the OBC itself.

4.0 Application and Scope

- a) This policy applies to all Members.
- b) Conduct on social media that falls short of the standards expressed in this policy or in the Code of Conduct may be subject to discipline under the Discipline and Complaints policy.
- c) A person who believes that an Individual's social media activity is inappropriate or may violate any of the OBC's policies should report the matter in the manner outlined in the Discipline and Complaints policy.
- d) This policy does not apply to communications tools used by the OBC (such as Slack Team, TeamSnap, etc.) in which Members do not establish personal profiles or post information on aspects of their life that may extend beyond the OBC.

5.0 Provisions

- a) The OBC encourages Individuals to engage with social media but cautions that such engagement relating to OBC related activities must meet the standards outlined in this policy and in the Code of Conduct.
- b) Given the nature of social media, as a continually developing form of communication, the OBC encourages its coaches, Members and volunteers to use their best judgement when interacting with others through social media.
- c) The OBC supports and encourages the rights to freedom of speech, expression and association including, but not limited to social media. Nevertheless, as representatives of the OBC, Individuals should recognize that they can be held to a higher standard and they may be viewed as public role models.
- d) The OBC encourages Individuals to embrace social media while following these guidelines:
 - i) Understand that Individuals may be perceived as representing the OBC. There are no off hours when it comes to social media;
 - ii) Accept that everything posted on social media is on the record and public. The ability to share social media communications is powerful; anything sent to a few can be shared with many within seconds;
 - iii) Choose your messaging and language wisely.
- e) Individuals acknowledge that their social media may be viewed by anyone, including but not limited to Members, Individuals, sponsors and the general public.
- f) Inappropriate material found by third parties affects those third parties' perceptions of the Individual, and potentially the OBC and its programs. When using social media, Individuals must model appropriate conduct befitting their role in the OBC.
- g) The following social media conduct may be considered a minor or a major infraction, at the discretion of the OBC:
 - i) Posting on social media inappropriate material that is directed at any person or persons;
 - ii) Posting on social media a picture, altered picture, video or graphic which is determined to be inappropriate;
 - iii) Creating or contributing to a social media group, webpage, blog or online forum, which is determined to be devoted solely, or in part, to promoting negative or disparaging remarks or commentary about the OBC, its stakeholders or its reputation;
 - iv) Any instance on social media of bullying or harassment between an Individual and another person; and
 - v) Appearing in social media in a picture, altered picture, video or graphic which is determined to be inappropriate, while wearing OBC-branded clothing.

6. Social media Guidelines for Coaches

The following guidelines should be used by Coaches to inform their own strategy for social media use:

- a) Choosing not to engage with social media is an acceptable social media strategy, so long as you actively use other communications media;
- b) Despite social media terminology, you are not, for example, actually “friends” with athletes. Resist commenting on athletes’ personal activities, status updates or social media communications that are unrelated to OBC activity;
- c) Coaches may not demand access to an Athlete’s private posts on any social media platform;
- d) Do not “friend”, or equivalent, any Athlete unless they request the connection. Never pressure athletes to “friend” you;
- e) Be careful not to show favouritism on social media, for example, by accepting some “friend” requests from athletes but not others;
- f) Consider managing your social media so that athletes do not have the option to follow or “friend” you;
- g) Seek permission from athletes before posting pictures or videos of them on publicly available social media for any purpose other than promoting the OBC and its programs;
- h) Do not use social media to trap an Athlete who says one thing to you in person but their social media reveals something different;
- i) Keep selection decisions and other official team business off social media;
- j) Never require athletes to join a social media platform or group, to subscribe to a social media feed or join a social media page about the OBC or its programs
- k) If you create a social media page or blog for your team or Athlete, do not make the social media site the exclusive location for important information. Duplicate such important information in more official channels, such as on the OBC website or via email.
- l) Communicate to parents / guardians that some Coach-Athlete interactions may take place on social media;
- m) Exercise appropriate discretion when using social media for your own personal communications (e.g., with friends) with the knowledge that your conduct may be used as a model by your athletes;
- n) Avoid association with social media groups, accounts or feeds that might compromise the Coach-Athlete relationship;
- o) Never misrepresent yourself by using a fake name or fake profile;
- p) Be aware that you may acquire information about an Athlete that imposes an obligation of disclosure on your part (such as an imminent threat of self-harm or to other Athletes);
- q) Be available for athletes if they initiate contact via social media – athletes may wish to have this easy and quick access to you – but avoid involving yourself in an Athlete’s personal social media space unless explicitly requested to do so; and
- r) Avoid adding athletes to Snapchat (or similar apps) and do not send Snapchats to athletes.

7. Social media Guidelines for Athletes

The following guidelines should be used by athletes to inform their own strategy for social media use:

- a) Set your privacy settings to restrict who can search for you and what private information others can see;
- b) Coaches, teammates, officials or opposing competitors may all “friend” you or add you to social media pages or follow you on social media. You are not required to accept being added, to follow anyone or be a social media friend with anyone;
- c) Avoid adding coaches to Snapchat (or similar apps) and do not send Snapchats to coaches;
- d) If you feel bullied or harassed by someone on social media, report it to your coach or to an OBC official;
- e) Do not feel pressured to join a fan page or to follow a feed or an account;
- f) Content posted on a social media platform, subject to your privacy settings, should be considered public. In most cases, you do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy for any material that you post;
- g) Content posted on a social media platform is almost always permanent – consider that others may take screenshots of your content (even Shapchats or similar apps) before you can delete them;
- h) Avoid posting pictures of, or alluding to, participation in illegal activity such as: drinking alcohol (if underage), physical assault, harassment and illegal use of drugs;
- i) Model appropriate conduct in social media befitting your status as an Athlete and as a Member of the OBC. As a Member, you have agreed to this policy and the Code of Conduct, both of which you must follow when you post material or interact with others through social media in a manner that links you to the OBC;
- j) Be aware that your content or conduct in public social media in contravention of this policy may be subject to sanction under the Discipline and Complaints policy.

8. Review

This Policy will be reviewed bi-annually or more frequently at the discretion of the OBC’s Governance Committee.