



# GREATER TORONTO HOCKEY LEAGUE

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Issued: As of June 1, 2016

Revised: May 29, 2018

### 1. Definitions

- **“GTHL”** means the Greater Toronto Hockey League.
- **“League”** means the GTHL and its Member Associations.
- **“Member Association” or “Member”** means any Club, Division, Affiliated Group or Sports School or any other body accepted for membership in the League from time to time.
- **“Participant”** means any Player, Team Official, Game Official, parent or legal guardian, director, officer, volunteer, employee, spectator or chaperone associated with a Member.
- **“Team Official”** means the coach, assistant coach, manager, trainer or other team official registered with a team that has been accepted by the League.

### 2. Introduction

The GTHL recognizes the importance of participating in online interactions and wants to ensure that all Participants associated with the League receive guidance on how to participate in social media in a positive and responsible manner.

This Social Media Policy (the “Policy”) aims to provide everyone associated with the League with guidelines to follow when engaging in communications and/or sharing content via any form of social media that can be linked to or in any way associated (whether directly or indirectly) with the League. The guidelines set out in the Policy are designed to protect the League as well as its Participants and others associated with them from illegal, unauthorized, irresponsible or abusive use of social media.

### 3. Scope of the Policy

All Members and Participants are required to comply with the Policy when participating or engaging in communications in social media personally or as an official representative of the League. Players and Team Officials alike are reminded that they continue to act as representatives of the League, even outside the hockey arena, and should conduct themselves in accordance with the Policy guidelines at all times.

The conduct of any Player or Team Official that violates the Policy, which may be linked to or perceived to be linked to or associated with the League, may result in disciplinary action taken by the League. The Policy is intended to enhance and supplement, and is not intended to replace

or supersede, any existing policies of the League including those in force and effect of Hockey Canada and the Ontario Hockey Federation.

#### **4. Definition of Social Media**

The term “social media” includes any media used for web-based, digital or mobile social interaction. Social media applications allow individuals to create and share user generated content with others. When used inappropriately or for questionable motivations social media interactions can be harmful and can cause substantial harm to the League and those involved with or otherwise associated with them.

Examples of social media covered by the Policy include, but are not limited to:

- Social Networking Sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat);
- Micro-blogging Sites (e.g. Twitter, Tumblr, Reddit);
- Online Video and Photo Sharing Communities (e.g. YouTube, Flickr, Vimeo, Tumblr);
- Online Discussion Forums;
- Website Encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia);
- Online User Review Forums (e.g. TripAdvisor, Yelp!);
- Personal or Corporate Blogs.

#### **5. Social Media Policy Guidelines**

When using social media, it is important for all those associated with the League to exercise common sense and good judgment. The guidelines set out in the *Social Media Policy Guidelines* hereto are intended to aid those associated with the League when using social media. In addition to the *Social Media Policy Guidelines* all Players, Team Officials and anyone else associated with the League and its operations are expected to adhere to all other policies applicable to the League including, but not limited to: the GTHL Harassment, Abuse, Bullying and Misconduct Policy; the GTHL Code of Conduct; the GTHL’s Rules, Regulations and Policies; and the Rules, Regulations and Policies of Hockey Canada and the Ontario Hockey Federation.

#### **6. Social Media Best Practices**

Below are best practices to help protect the League’s brand and goodwill in the social space. Adhering to them will aid in reducing situations that could lead to disciplinary action:

##### **Use Discretion**

Use discretion both when shooting photography and video content and when choosing to share it on the Internet. Under no circumstance should any photo or video be taken within a dressing room and be posted on any social media platform – see GTHL Rule 19.2(f). Seemingly harmless photos and video of this kind can cause substantial harm to and may even ruin reputations and as such are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Photos taken and shared via social media could inadvertently reveal confidential, proprietary, private and

personal information. Any shared content that can be considered detrimental to the safety, well-being, or reputation of anyone associated with the League may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Be Courteous**

Always be courteous and respectful online. If you need help with a particularly difficult situation, contact the GTHL Executive Director or the President of your Member Association, as applicable.

### **Use Common Sense**

Anything you put online is there to stay. Confidential, proprietary, private and personal information concerning the League, or any person associated with the League, must remain strictly confidential. Even if you remove a Facebook post, tweet or video, it could already have been saved and/or shared by another user. All such communications are discoverable under the federal laws of Canada and the provincial laws applicable in Ontario.

### **Respect the Privacy of Everyone**

Simply put, some things do not belong on the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, discussions or other communications about the League. Any violations or breaches of the Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension and/or formal removal and termination from the League. Any such determination made by the club may be made in its sole discretion at any time.

### **When in Doubt, Ask**

Whether you have a question about how to properly respond to a request from a fan, sponsor, player, staff member or any other person associated with the League, ask the League's manager of corporate partnerships and communications for resources or direction.

### **Alert Club Management If Needed**

If you see something concerning in the social media space that could impact the League or anyone associated with the League, contact the League's manager, corporate partnerships and communications or your club president immediately. Concerns or issues should be addressed as soon as possible to minimize potential damages cause by inappropriate or prohibited content.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY GUIDELINES:**

1. DO NOT post, shoot video or take photos inside any dressing room or mode of transportation used by or in connection with the League without the prior written consent and approval from either the League President or Executive Director.
2. DO NOT post video filmed of any League-sanctioned game, be it a regular season, playoff, tournament or exhibition game, on the internet or any social media platform without the prior written consent of the League President or Executive Director.
3. DO NOT divulge secrets, confidential, proprietary or personal and/or health information or status concerning any aspect of the League, whether concerning you or anyone else associated with the League.
4. ALWAYS comply with all laws, including those relating to libel, copyright, trademark and data protection, and regulations, including those made or issued by Hockey Canada and the Ontario Hockey Federation.
5. ALWAYS remember that even in your private communications, your actions and/or words — in any media — may reflect on the League and may cause irreparable harm to the League and its Members. Remain courteous and professional at all times.

Your social media and any other online content is permanent and accessible to anyone. If you have any questions regarding compliance with the social media policy, please contact either the League's Manager, Corporate Partnerships and Communications or your club president before you post.

If you become aware of any breach of the social media policy by any person associated with the League, please contact either the GTHL Executive Director or the President of your Member Association before you post. Please save images or videos, or use a screenshot, to capture any apparent breach of this Policy.

## **GTHL CODE OF CONDUCT:**

1. The Greater Toronto Hockey League (“GTHL”) is committed to providing a sport environment in which all individuals are treated with respect.
2. During the course of all GTHL activities, athletes, coaches, assistant coaches, trainers, managers, officials, parents, directors, officers, volunteers, employees or chaperones and others within the GTHL and each of the GTHL Member Associations:
  - a) shall conduct themselves, at all times, in a fair and responsible manner and refrain from comments or behaviours that are disrespectful, offensive, abusive, racist or sexist. In particular, the GTHL will not tolerate behaviour that constitutes harassment, abuse, bullying or misconduct;
  - b) shall avoid behaviour which brings the GTHL and/or its Member Associations, or the sport of hockey into disrepute, including but not limited to the abusive use of alcohol and/or non-medical use of drugs;
  - c) shall not use unlawful performance enhancing drugs or methods, nor shall they engage in any activity or behaviour that endangers the safety of others; and
  - d) shall at all times adhere to the Hockey Canada, Ontario Hockey Federation (“OHF”), GTHL and its Member Associations’ operational policies and procedures, to rules governing Hockey Canada, OHF, GTHL or GTHL Member Association events and activities and to rules governing any competition in which they participate on behalf of Hockey Canada, the OHF, GTHL or GTHL Member Association.
3. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, the loss or suspension of certain or all privileges connected with the respective Member Association and/or GTHL including the opportunity to participate in Hockey Canada, OHF, GTHL and its Member Association activities. Such discipline may include the removal or ban from an arena, games, practices and other team activities.

## **LINKS:**

### **GTHL HARASSMENT, ABUSE, BULLYING & MISCONDUCT POLICY**

<http://gthl.uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/app/uploads/gthl/2013/10/22195124/GTHL-Harassment-Abuse-Bullying-Misconduct-Policy-FINAL.pdf>

### **ONTARIO HOCKEY FEDERATION RULES, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES**

<http://www.ohf.on.ca/view/ohfmainsite/ohf-policies>

### **HOCKEY CANADA RULES, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES**

[https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2017\\_18\\_articles\\_bylaws\\_e.pdf](https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2017_18_articles_bylaws_e.pdf)