



HOCKEY GEELONG

Geelong Hockey Association

HOCKEY GEELONG SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

PURPOSE

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a member-based organisation, the Geelong Hockey Association Inc (trading as Hockey Geelong, or commonly referred to as HG) recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members.

HG welcomes comments, ideas, and insights from its hockey community. Social media is now part of everyday life and has evolved the way we communicate. It is an important tool that when used appropriately increases the visibility of both our sport and community.

HG, its affiliates and clubs, have long histories and are highly respected organisations. It is important that HG's and hockey's reputation is not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference the organisation.

When someone clearly identifies their association with HG, and/or discusses their involvement in the organisation in this type of forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with HG stated values and policies.

This policy aims to provide some guiding principles to follow when using social media. This policy does **not** apply to the personal use of social media platforms by HG members or staff where the HG member or staff member makes no reference to HG or related issues.

SCOPE

This policy applies to Hockey Geelong affiliates, clubs, staff, members and any individual representing themselves or passing themselves off as being a member of HG.

This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, such activities as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Shutterfly, Twitter, or MySpace);
- Content sharing sites including (but not limited to): Flickr (photo sharing) and You Tube (video sharing);
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- Leaving products or service reviews on retailer sites, or stakeholder review sites;
- Taking part in online votes and polls;
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards); or
- Editing a Wikipedia page.

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, colleagues, stakeholders, sponsors or HG as an organisation.

OUR COMMITMENT

Electronic communication is essential for sharing Hockey Geelong news and information with members. Communication will be appropriate, timely, and related to HG business.

WHAT WE WILL DO

We use a range of electronic tools to communicate with our members.

Our communication will protect members' privacy, maintain clear boundaries and ensure that bullying and harassment does not occur.

WHAT WE ASK YOU TO DO

We expect our members to conduct themselves appropriately when using electronic communication to share information with other members, using social media platforms, or posting material on public websites connected to HG or affiliated clubs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The web is not anonymous. HG members, officials and staff should assume that everything they write can be traced back to them.
- The boundaries between a member's profession, volunteer time and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that members make a clear distinction between what they do in a professional capacity and what they do, think and say in their capacity as a volunteer for HG, their club or other interested party.
- Honesty is always the best policy, especially online. It is important that HG members think of the web as a permanent record of online actions and opinions.
- When using the internet for professional or personal pursuits, all members must respect the HG brand and follow guidelines in place to ensure HG's intellectual property or its relationships with sponsors and stakeholders is not compromised or the organisation is brought into disrepute.
- Protect your personal privacy and that of others by not including personal information about yourself or others in your posts.
- Represent your own views and not impersonate or falsely represent any other person
- Ensure you are not abusive and do not harass or threaten others
- Do not make defamatory or libellous comments
- Do not use offensive, insulting, provocative or hateful language
- Do not use obscene or offensive language
- Show courtesy and respect for others and their opinions at all times
- Always use social media network forums to add value and promote hockey in a positive way.

USAGE

For HG members and staff using social media, such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libellous, defamatory or harassing content. This also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames;
- Must not comment on, or publish, information that is confidential or in any way sensitive to HG, its affiliates, partners or sponsors; and
- Must not bring the organisation or hockey into disrepute.

Furthermore, HG members and staff may not use the HG brand to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause or political candidate; and it must be abundantly clear to all readers that any and all opinion shared are those of the individual, and do not represent or reflect the views of HG.

WEBSITE

A webmaster will be appointed to provide accountability and control over material published on the Hockey Geelong website and any related discussion groups or social media websites, such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter.

Our website will include current information on competitions, social events, committees, policies, constitution, rules and by-laws.

- No offensive content or photos will be published.
- Before we publish a photo of a child, we will seek permission from their parents and take care not to provide identifying information.
- We will seek feedback from members to improve the information available on the site.

HOCKEY GEELONG'S STAFF (OR AUTHORISED PERSONS) ONLINE USAGE GUIDELINES

If you are authorised to represent the HG through social media, or if you intend to discuss issues linked to HG we expect you to follow these guidelines:

- Only those authorised by HG's Management Committee or Executive have permission to represent the organisation through social media. If you do not have authority then you must not imply that you are in any way authorised to speak on behalf of HG.
- If expressing your own views and opinions about HG, or hockey, please use a disclaimer. An example of a disclaimer is: "the views expressed in this post are mine only and do not necessarily reflect the views of HG."
- Please be aware that it is very easy for HG to track and identify the source of any comments in the social media environment. If you make comments that contravene these guidelines the issue may be escalated as required.
- If you are unsure of answering a question directed at you, please do not answer, but instead respond with: 'That's a good question. Let me check and I'll get back to you as quickly as I can'. Please then contact the HG President or their authorised Proxy to receive further guidance.
- Please be aware that it is very difficult to take-back or remove any comments from the social media environment. Please be certain that your comments will not be damaging to any parties.
- Please do not respond directly to any media enquiries you receive online. Please refer any media to the President of HG.
- If you do make a mistake in the social media environment (i.e. accidentally posting inaccurate information) please notify the President as soon as possible; they will advise on the best course of action.
- Please ensure you are not the first to make any HG announcement unless you have received appropriate approval from the President or their nominated person. Do not include HG logos in your postings.

SMS AND EMAIL

Committee members, coaches and team managers may use SMS and email to provide information about competition, training, HG and club-sanctioned social events and other club business, however:

- SMS messages should be short and about club/team matters.
- email communication will be used when more information is required.
- communication involving children (Under 18) will be directed - wherever possible - through their parents. This does not preclude a Team Manager or Coach contacting an Under 18 player directly if is deemed necessary.

SOCIAL MEDIA WEBSITES, BLOGS, FORUMS

- We treat all social media postings - pictorial, images or written - blogs, status updates and tweets as public "comment".

- Postings (written, photos or videos) will be family-friendly and feature positive club news and events.
- No personal information about our members will be disclosed.
- No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
- No statements will be made that might bring our club into disrepute.
- Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive statements will not be tolerated. Offending posts will be removed and those deemed to be responsible will be blocked from the site.

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for staff/ club member use, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person at a club/HG has given written consent to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permission must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of minor children may not be replicated on any site without the written permission of the child's parent and /or guardian.

For official HG blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content;
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through 'pop up' content which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should **not** be used for online forums or social pages as the nature of the 'pop up' content cannot be controlled;
- HG staff must not use HG online pages to promote personal projects; and
- All material published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

CONSIDERATIONS TOWARDS OTHERS WHEN USING SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. HG members and staff must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way.

Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about HG, its members or staff online.

BRANDING AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP)

It is important that any trademarks belonging to HG or any affiliated Club, are not used in personal social media applications. Trademarks include HG or Associated Club logos

BREACH OF POLICY

HG continually monitors online activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to HG.

Members may face disciplinary action for sending inappropriate electronic communication or posting online content or comments that harass, offend, intimidate or humiliate another member, as outlined in our member protection policy or code of conduct.

If a HG member or an affiliate notices an inappropriate comment posted that defames or is abusive, contact the HG President immediately. The Website administrator will be instructed to hide and report inappropriate content posted to official HG sites as soon as it is noticed or reported. The administrator will also be required to take a screen shot/copy of all inappropriate content prior to removing, as potential evidence.

If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action from HG. This may include being barred from using the page. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other HG policies. This may

involve a verbal or written warning or in a serious cases, termination of employment for staff or engagement with HG. HG members may be disciplined in accordance with HG disciplinary regulations (Codes of Behaviour).

Under certain circumstances, cyber bullying (e.g. bullying that is carried out through an internet service such as email, a chat room, discussion group, instant messaging or website) is a criminal offence that can be reported to the police.

In addition, members who publish false or misleading comments about another person in the public domain via social media (including, but not limited to: Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, YouTube or Twitter etc) may be liable under defamation laws.

CONSULTATION OR ADVICE

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for HG members and staff in a new area of social interaction. HG members or staff, who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online and seek clarification, should contact the HG President.

REVIEW, ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS

This policy will be reviewed and evaluated bi-annually, or more frequently as required.

Recommendations for changes can be submitted at any time to the HG President. If a change is consequently required, this will then be tabled for discussion at the next Management Committee meeting. All changes to policy will be communicated with members and affiliates and revised policy made available on the HG website.

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