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Description automatically generated**Policy & Procedures Manual**

**Wisconsin Swimming, Inc.**

**Policy 34: Electronic Communications and Social Media**

**Effective Date**: March 28, 2023

**Scope**: Provide guidance to LSC committees, staff, and membership on the use of electronic communications, as well as social media sites and applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others.

**Background:**  Wisconsin Swimming’s electronic communication and social media practices are based on Safe Sport directives from the US Center for SafeSport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP). Electronic communications include, but are not limited to: phone calls, videoconferencing, video coaching, texting, and social media. Wisconsin Swimming believes social media is an effective method of communicating in today’s market to reach members with event coverage, accomplishment acknowledgment, swimming motivation, swim resources and other LSC information. WI Swimming also acknowledges its expectation to uphold USA Swimming’s Safe Sport guidelines.

* 1. **Mandatory Electronic Communications Components**
     1. Open and Transparent
        1. All one-on-one electronic communications between an Adult Participant and a Minor Athlete must be Open and Transparent
        2. Exceptions:
           1. When a Dual Relationship exists; or
           2. When the Close-in-Age Exception applies; or
           3. If a Minor Athlete needs a Personal Care Assistant and:

the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian has provided written consent to the Organization for the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant to work with the Minor Athlete; and

the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Education & Training Policy; and

the Adult Participant Personal Care Assistant has complied with the Organization’s screening policy.

* + - 1. Open and Transparent means:
         1. That the Adult Participant copies or includes the Minor Athlete’s parent/guardian, another adult family member of the Minor Athlete, or another Adult Participant.
         2. If a Minor Athlete communicates with the Adult Participant first, the Adult Participant must follow this policy if the Adult Participant responds.
         3. Only platforms that allow for Open and Transparent communication may be used to communicate with Minor Athletes.
    1. Team Communication
       1. When an Adult Participant communicates electronically to the entire team or any number of Minor Athletes on the team, the Adult Participant must copy or include another Adult Participant or the Minor Athletes’ parents/guardians.
       2. If an Adult Participant receives a call or text from a minor athlete, the minor athlete’s parent/legal guardian should be included in any response, unless an exception applies.
    2. Content
       1. All electronic communication originating from an Adult Participant(s) to a Minor Athlete(s) must be professional in nature unless an exception exists as specified in 34.1.1 B.
    3. Requests to discontinue electronic communications
       1. Parents/guardians may request in writing that the Organization or an Adult Participant subject to this policy not contact their Minor Athlete through any form of electronic communication.
       2. The Organization and the Adult Participant must abide by any request to discontinue, absent emergency circumstances.
    4. Hours
       1. Electronic communications should generally be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. local time for the location of the Minor Athlete.
       2. Electronic communications shall not be sent between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.
       3. LSC communications to a committee including an athlete representative cannot be sent between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.
       4. Telephone and video conferences are considered electronic communications and are not permitted to be conducted with a minor athlete between the hours of 9:00 p.m. – 5:00 a.m.
       5. The applicable time zone is that where the athlete is located.
    5. Social Media Connections
       1. Adult Participants, except those with a Dual Relationship or who meet the Close-in-Age Exception, are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with Minor Athletes.
       2. Adult participants, except those with a Dual Relationship or who meet the Close-in Age Exception, shall discontinue existing social media connections with Minor Athletes.
       3. If an athlete member turns 18 and becomes an Adult Participant, the adult athlete may continue to communicate with minor athlete friends and teammates through social media and electronic communications if:
          1. the adult athlete does not have authority over the minor athlete, and
          2. the adult athlete is no more than four years older than the minor athlete.
          3. Otherwise, the adult athlete shall follow the MAAPP requirements.
  1. **Social Media Goals and Intent**:
     + 1. To promote members’ knowledge of Wisconsin Swimming events, resources, and elected representatives.
       2. To motivate members towards swimming achievements.
       3. To elicit a positive attitude towards the LSC and its involvements.
       4. To create a community feel amongst LSC members.
       5. To broaden the membership’s awareness of WI Swimming and USA Swimming nationally and internationally.
       6. To provide athletes and non-athletes with helpful apps, information and understanding.
  2. **Social Media Expectations and Content:**
     + 1. Use social media in an appropriate manner for all athlete age levels/abilities.
       2. All social media posts will be positive in nature and empower athletes and their families.
       3. All social media posts will adhere to USA Swimming’s Safe Sport guidelines.
       4. All photographic posts will capture the general nature of the event not a specific swimmer unless specific permission is granted from the photographed athlete.
       5. WI Social Media platforms will be kept current and active.
       6. Parental permission must be obtained for Athlete Representatives under the age of eighteen (18) to have admin privileges on any WI‐LSC athlete-administered social media page.
  3. **Involvement and Oversight:**
     + 1. The WI Athlete Junior and Senior Reps and designated board member/athlete liaison will have access to all social media passwords and account information.
       2. Only currently elected Junior and Senior Reps with adult oversight, such as a designated board member, LSC Staff member, or Athlete Liaison, will have administrative privileges on WI LSC social media pages.
       3. All designated “posters” or admins for WI LSC social media will follow common sense guidelines and when in question check with another rep, designated adult, or board member.
       4. Athlete Junior and Senior Reps will be the primary designated posters on WI LSC social media. Athlete reps may appoint a specific athlete social media designee as needed.
       5. A designated board member, LSC Staff member, or Athlete Liaison will be designated to provide social media oversight. This person will be responsible for maintaining his/her own social media presence to observe WI LSC social media post in action.
       6. Designated posters will be kept to a minimum committee to ensure WI LSC branding and vision are consistent.
       7. LSC committees should provide information and material suitable for posting to the designated social media posters as needed.
       8. To post a picture in which a minor athlete’s face is prominent, it is necessary to obtain permission from that individual’s parent/guardian to post the picture on a social media site.

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| **Date of Revision** | **Policy Section(s)** | **Changes Made** |
| October 22, 2019 |  | New policy established |
| March 28, 2023 | Title  34.1  34.2 to 34.4 | Renamed title of Policy 34  Added all new content for electronic communications  Moved from old Section 34.1, with minor edits |