

Approved Date:
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Board President Signature:



**HOOD RIVER VALLEY SWIM TEAM
SOCIAL MEDIA & ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY**

PURPOSE:

The Hood River Valley Swim Team recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

This policy meets the intent and best practices of both USA Swimming and the US Center for Safe Sport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP) with respect to electronic communication.

DEFINITION OF APPLICABLE ADULT: All USA Swimming non-athlete members and adult athlete members, participating non-members (for example, meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.), LSC and club adult staff, board members, and any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete.

SECTION ONE: GENERAL PRICIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

- I. All communications between an applicable adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.
- II. Electronic communication with an athlete may not contain or relate to any of the following:
 - A. Drugs or alcohol use
 - B. Sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language, sexual activity
 - C. The adult’s personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems
 - D. Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- III. Any communication concerning an athlete’s personal life, social activities, relationship, family issues, or personal problems must be transparent, accessible, and professional (TAP). Applicable Adults should use the following guidance when determining appropriateness of communication:
 - A. Transparency: Communication should be clear, direct, and free of hidden meanings, innuendo, and expectations. (ex-Is the communication something someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?)
 - B. Accessible: All electronic communication between applicable adults and an athlete should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. The athlete’s parent or legal guardian should always be included in communication to an athlete so there is no question regarding accessibility. (ex- Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient

of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?)

C. Professional: All electronic communication between an applicable adult and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

IV. Communication meeting all of the TAP criteria is most likely appropriate.

SECTION TWO: SOCIAL MEDIA (FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, TWITTER, AND SIMILAR SITES)

I. Applicable Adults may have personal social media accounts, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a friend or follower.

A. An applicable adult may not accept any "friend" request from an athlete. In addition, the applicable adult should remind the athlete that this is not appropriate.

B. Existing social media connections between applicable adults and minor athletes must be discontinued.

C. Applicable adults and athletes are not permitted to private or instant message each other electronically.

D. Applicable adults are encouraged to set their personal social media accounts to private to prevent athletes from accessing personal information.

II. The Club may have official social media sites that athletes and their parents may friend or follow for information and updates on team-related matters.

SECTION THREE: TEXTING

I. Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between applicable adults and athletes during the hours of 8am until 8pm.

II. Electronic communication between an adult athlete and a minor teammate may be conducted outside the hours of 8am and 8pm.

III. Texting shall only be used for the purpose of communicating information directly to related team activities.

IV. The athlete's parent or legal guardian must also be included in all text communication to an athlete.

SECTION FOUR: EMAIL

I. Athletes and applicable adults may use email to communicate between the hours of 8am and 8pm.

II. When communicating with an athlete via email the athlete's parent or legal guardian must also be copied.

SECTION FIVE: DISCONTINUATION OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

I. The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches, board members, team volunteers, or other applicable adults through any form of electronic communication.