

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY****Preamble**

1. Golf Ontario's employees, volunteers, board and team members reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. As representatives of Golf Ontario, we require all parties to exercise good judgment in their use of Social Media and conduct themselves in a responsible and respectful manner. For this policy, Social Media refers to publications and commentary on social networking sites such as: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, Reddit and Snapchat as well as any other platforms, blogs, or online forums.
2. To assist in posting content to these sites, Golf Ontario has developed policies and guidelines for official and personal use of Social Media. Official use refers to anyone posting on behalf of the organization, with any form of Golf Ontario in their user name or description. Personal use refers to posts about Golf Ontario through a personal, non-affiliated account of an employee, volunteer, board or team member. Golf Ontario employees, volunteers, board and team members, are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy.
3. Golf Ontario is aware that Participant interaction and communication occurs frequently on social media. Golf Ontario cautions Participants that any conduct falling short of the standard of behaviour required by this *Social Media Policy* and the *Code of Conduct and Ethics* may be subject to the disciplinary sanctions identified within the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.

**Application of this Policy**

4. This Policy applies to all Participants.

**General Guidelines**

5. The purpose of using Social Media channels on behalf of Golf Ontario is to support the organization's mission, goals, programs, efforts and events, including news, information, content and objectives.
6. When posting on behalf of Golf Ontario, refrain from reporting, speculating, discussing or giving opinions on Golf Ontario topics or personalities that could be considered sensitive, confidential or disparaging.
7. Confidential or proprietary information that has been shared with you should not be publicized on Social Media channels.
8. As in all communications, the employees, volunteers, board and team members should be consistent in their message when posting about Golf Ontario. Posters are not permitted to post information, photos or other representations of inappropriate behavior, or items that could be interpreted as demeaning or inflammatory. All communications will be respectful of others. This includes the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, and obscenity) but also proper consideration of privacy of objectionable topics, such as politics and religion.
9. Posters are encouraged to tag the accounts of players and coaches, along with images, as long as by doing so it does not release any personal information the subject does not already have on their account/handle.
10. Golf Ontario's social media assets are to be used for positive interaction. Please refrain from posting negative comments or criticizing anything; including players, officials, coaches, or organizations.
11. When posting on behalf of Golf Ontario, professionalism and quality must be maintained. This includes ensuring use of proper grammar, syntax, style and accuracy of information in all posts.
12. Posters will not use social media to promote goods or services not affiliated with Golf Ontario.
13. When material is posted on Golf Ontario social sites that does not follow the Social Media Policy, that material will be removed promptly or the individual who posted on an affiliated account will be asked to remove said post. It is not the intent of Golf Ontario to police accounts, so please, stay positive, humble and professional.

**Guidelines for posting**

14. If you see a misrepresentation of Golf Ontario in the media, you may point it out and report it to the Communications staff. Lively conversations are encouraged, but if you feel the values of Golf Ontario are being contradicted by a comment, it should be addressed immediately, with proper response and backing from the department, which it was directed at.
15. If an error is made, correct it quickly and if you modify an earlier post make it known that you have done so. If accused of posting something incorrect, seek official response from the department, which the issue concerns, and correct immediately.

**Conduct and Behaviour**

16. All conduct and behaviour occurring on Social Media must comply with the *Code of Conduct and Ethics*.
17. Participants may not engage in the following behaviour on social media:
  - a) Posting a disrespectful, hateful, harmful, disparaging, or insulting comment on a social medium that is directed at a Participant, at Golf Ontario, or at other individuals connected with Golf Ontario.
  - b) Posting a picture, altered picture, or video on a social medium that is harmful, disrespectful, insulting, embarrassing, suggestive, provocative, or otherwise offensive, and that is directed at a Participant, at Golf Ontario, or at other individuals connected with Golf Ontario.
  - c) Creating or contributing to a Facebook group, webpage, Instagram account, Twitter feed, blog, or any other platforms or online forums devoted solely or in part to promoting negative or disparaging remarks or commentary about Golf Ontario or its stakeholders or reputation.
  - d) Any instance of cyber-bullying or cyber-harassment between one Participant and another Participant (including a teammate, coach, opponent, volunteer, or official), where incidents of cyber-bullying and cyber-harassment can include but are not limited to the following conduct on any social medium, via text-message, or via email: regular insults, negative comments, vexatious behaviour, pranks or jokes, threats, posing as another person, spreading rumours or lies, or other harmful behaviour.
18. Violations of this Social Media Policy may be subject to the Discipline and Complaints Policy.
19. If Golf Ontario unofficially engages with a Participant on Social Media (such as by retweeting a tweet or sharing a photo on Facebook) the Participant may, at any time, ask Golf Ontario to cease this engagement.
20. Removing content from Social Media after it has been posted (either publicly or privately) does not excuse the Participant from being subject to the Discipline and Complaints Policy.
21. An individual who believes that a Participant's Social Media activity is inappropriate or may violate policies and procedures should report the matter to Golf Ontario in the manner outlined by the Discipline and Complaints Policy.

**Golf Ontario Responsibilities**

22. Golf Ontario has a responsibility to understand if and how Persons in Authority and Athletes are using Social Media to communicate with each other.
23. Complaints and concerns about the behaviour of a Person in Authority or Athlete in Social Media can be addressed under the *Discipline and Complaints Policy*.