

Ontario Weightlifting Association Social Media Policy

Definitions

1. The following terms have these meanings in this Policy:

“Case Manager” – The person or organization appointed by the Ontario Weightlifting Association to oversee the management and administration of complaints.

“Member” – All members defined in the Ontario Weightlifting Association Bylaws as well as all individuals employed by, or engaged in activities with, the Ontario Weightlifting Association including, but not limited to, athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, managers, administrators, directors and officers of the Ontario Weightlifting Association, spectators at events, and parents/guardians of athletes.

“OWA” – Ontario Weightlifting Association.

“Social media” – The catch-all term that is applied broadly to computer-mediated communication media including, but not limited to, blogs, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, X (formally known as Twitter), etc.

Purpose

2. The OWA acknowledges the modern significance of social media platforms and online communities as channels for communication and engagement across diverse age groups. While understanding that Social Media and the immediacy of mobile device technology bring many opportunities for communications, the potential risk of privacy violation, the risk of sharing proprietary information, and the opportunity for Code of Conduct violations, whether innocent or intentional; necessitates a policy to establish guidelines for the usage of social media by members and affiliates of the OWA.

Scope

3. This Policy applies to all Individuals, including but not limited to OWA members, employees, and volunteers.

Policy

4. OWA is aware that individual interaction and communication occur frequently on Social Media. The principles and guidelines that apply to any/all organization activities in general, as found in the Code of Conduct, apply to all online activities. The OWA cautions individuals that any conduct falling short of the standard of behavior required by this Social Media Policy and the Code of Conduct may be subject to the disciplinary sanctions identified within the Discipline and Complaints Policy.

Conduct and Behaviour

5. OWA members are encouraged to post positive experiences and respectful comments. Some examples of appropriate posts are personal accomplishments in training or at competitions; support for fellow athletes, coaches, officials, or the OWA; interest in OWA and other weightlifting events; and questions relating to rules of the sport, OWA policies, upcoming events et cetera.
6. Per the OWA Discipline & Complaints Policy and relevant Code(s) of Conduct, the following Social Media conduct and behavior may be considered minor or major infractions by a Case Manager:
 - a) Posting a disrespectful, hateful, harmful, disparaging, defamatory, insulting, or otherwise negative comment on a Social Medium;
 - b) Posting a picture, altered picture, or video on a Social Medium that is harmful, disrespectful, insulting, or otherwise offensive;

- c) Sending inappropriate or suggestive pictures, texts, or instant messages, of a sexual nature.
- d) Spreading hate regarding an identifiable group as defined by the criminal code of Canada.
 - i. Definition of Identifiable group
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/section-318.html>
 - ii. Public incitement of hatred
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/section-319.html>
- e) Inappropriate personal or sexual relationships over a Social Medium between Individuals who have a Power Imbalance in their interactions, such as between Athletes and coaches, Directors and Officers, committee members and staff, technical officials, and Athletes, etc
- f) Creating or contributing to a Social Medium vehicle, such as a Facebook group, webpage, Instagram account, X (Twitter) feed, blog, or online forum, devoted solely or in part to promoting negative or disparaging remarks or commentary about any member of the OWA, WCH, or their stakeholders;
- g) Any instance of cyber-bullying or cyber-harassment, 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 email: regular insults, negative comments, vexatious or unwelcome behavior, pranks or jokes, threats, posing as another person, spreading rumors or lies, or other harmful behavior;
- h) Any instance of bringing the sport of Olympic weightlifting into disrepute.
- i) Public defamatory comments towards any group or persons by a member or non-member.
 - i. See Defamatory Libel (sections 298-301)
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/FullText.html>

Discipline

- 7. All infractions to the conduct and behavior occurring on Social Media may be subject to the OWA *Discipline & Complaints Policy* by a Case Manager.

Member Responsibilities

- 8. Members of the OWA are deemed to be aware of the following:
 - a) Individuals acknowledge that their Social Media activity may be viewable and viewed by anyone, including OWA, WCH, PSOs, Member Organizations, or other Individuals.
 - b) When using Social Media, an Individual must model appropriate behavior befitting the Individual's role and status in connection with OWA and WCH.
 - c) Removing content from Social Media after it has been posted (either publicly or privately) does not excuse the Individual from being subject to the Discipline and Complaints Policy.
 - d) An Individual who believes that another Individual's Social Media activity is inappropriate or may violate the policies and procedures of OWA or WCH should report the matter in the manner outlined by the Discipline and Complaints Policy.
 - e) Everyone should be cognizant of standards of member and participant privacy and confidentiality. Privacy and confidentiality must be maintained in all environments, including online, and must at all times refrain from posting identifiable member or participant information of any kind online.

OWA Social Media Accounts

- 9. Organization representation, including specific programs or teams, via online Social Media platforms, can only be initiated and authorized by the OWA Board of Directors or WCH's representative. Any accounts existing without prior authorization as required above will be subject to review and may be amended or removed.

10. The OWA Board of Directors will identify specific employees/volunteers who will be given access to communicate via official OWA and WCH Social Media accounts.
11. Appropriate training sessions will take place with those granted access to communicate on behalf of the organizations.
12. In the event of an emerging crisis or potentially harmful information (whether through Social Media or traditional media), all communication will originate only from OWA's designated spokespeople.
13. If OWA or WCH unofficially engages with an Individual on Social Media (such as by retweeting a tweet or sharing a photo on Facebook), the Individual may, at any time, ask OWA or WCH to cease this engagement.

Review and Approval

This Policy was last reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on June 28, 2020.

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Adopted	March 11, 2013
Reviewed	November 26, 2023