

PLSHA Social Media, Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy

As part of PLSHA's emphasis on athlete safety, communications involving our youth players should be appropriate, productive, and transparent. Effective communication concerning travel, practice or games schedules, and administrative issues among administrators, coaches, players and their families is critical. However, the use of mobile devices, web-based applications, social media, and other forms of electronic communications increases the possibility for improprieties and misunderstandings and also provides potential offenders with unsupervised and potentially inappropriate access to participants. The improper use of mobile and electronic communications can result in misconduct. Adherence to a policy for mobile and electronic communication reduces these risks.

All electronic communications between coach and player must be for the purpose of communicating information about these activities. Coaches and players must follow common sense guidelines regarding the volume and time of day of any allowed electronic communication. Any content of an electronic communication should be readily available to share with the public or families of the player or coach. If the player is under the age of 18, any e-mail, electronic text, social media, or similar communication must copy or include the player's parents.

- Social Media (Facebook, MySpace, Blogs and Similar Sites)
 - Online discussion boards, mass emails, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media make it easy to share ideas and experiences. PLSHA recognizes this; however, that social media, mobile and other electronic communications can be especially concerning where youth participants are involved.
 - Coaches are prohibited from having players joined to their personal social media page.
 - To facilitate communication, an official organization or team page may be set up and players and parents may join (i.e., "friend") the official organization or team page and coaches can communicate to players through the site. All posts, messages, text, or media of any kind between coach and player must be non-personal in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities or for team orientated motivational purposes.
- E-Mail, Text Messaging and Similar Electronic Communications
 - Coaches and players may use e-mail and text messaging to communicate. All e-mail and text message content between coach and player must be non-personal in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities.
 - E-Mail and text messages from a coach to any youth player **must** include a copy to parents.
 - Where possible, a coach should be provided and use the organization web site e-mail center for all communications with the team and players.
- Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications or Imagery with Athlete
 - Following any written request by the parents or legal guardians of a youth player that their child not be contacted by any form of electronic communication by coaches or

other adults, the organization, team and coaches and administrator shall immediately comply with such request without any repercussions for such request.

- Abuse and Misconduct
 - Social media and electronic communications can also be used to commit abuse and misconduct (e.g., emotional, sexual, bullying, harassment, and hazing). Such communications by coaches, volunteers, administrators, officials, parents or athletes will not be tolerated and are considered violations of PLSHA's Participant Protection Program.
- Reporting
 - Infractions of PLSHA's Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy should be reported to PLSHA's Safesport coordinator.
 - A PLSHA participant or parent of a participant who violates this Mobile and Electronic Communications Policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement authorities.