



# Social Media Policy

## 1.0 Purpose

Social media (see 2.0 below for definition) offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. As a member-based organisation, Brisbane Softball Association (BSA) recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members.

BSA and its clubs have long histories and are highly respected organisations. It is important that BSA's reputation is not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference the organisation.

Social media is no different than a live microphone. What you post will be broadcast across a wide audience and therefore you must be mindful of how your comments will be interpreted by more than just your closest friends. You must be prepared for your posts to be seen by the persons you are referring to, your team mates, your players, your coach, parents, siblings and of course the committee. When someone clearly identifies their club or team with BSA and/or discusses their involvement in the organisation in this type of forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with BSA's stated values and policies.

This policy aims to provide some guiding principles to follow when using social media. This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media platforms by BSA members<sup>1</sup> or employees<sup>2</sup> where the BSA member or employee makes no reference to the BSA or related issues. It relates specifically to the use of social media to make comment in a context that is identifiable as being in relation to BSA. This includes, but is not limited to, comments or implied comments regarding:

- games or Association events;
- team or player performance;
- individuals with a direct context or mention of their role with BSA such as officials and umpires; and
- the BSA as an Association.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this policy, all players and officials participating in BSA competitions are considered 'members'.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this policy, 'employees' include volunteers even though no payment is received.

## **2.0 Scope**

This policy applies to BSA members, employees or any individuals representing themselves or passing themselves off as being a member of BSA. At the discretion of the BSA Board, this policy may also be applied to a parent / guardian, sibling or other member of the BSA Softball community.

This policy covers all forms of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, such activities as:

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Shutterfly, Twitter or MySpace);
- Content sharing including Flickr (photo sharing) and YouTube (video sharing);
- Commenting on blogs for personal or business reasons;
- Leaving product or service reviews on retailer sites, or customer review sites;
- Taking part in online votes and polls;
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards); or
- Editing a Wikipedia page.

The intent of this policy is to include anything posted online where information is shared that might affect members, colleagues, clients, sponsors or Softball as an organisation.

## **3.0 BSA Social Media -- Code of Conduct Requirements**

1. Must not comment on, or publish, information that is confidential or in any way sensitive to BSA, its affiliates, partners or sponsors.
2. Must not bring the organisation or softball into disrepute.
3. All comments, notes or photos posted on social media sites in relation to the BSA and its members are to be constructive or positive in their nature.
4. Always ensure that you do not post material that is vulgar, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful. This also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames.
5. It is your responsibility to be respectful at all times on social media. You are expected to show the same respect and regard for people that you would when playing, officiating or attending a softball game.
6. Do not use social media to be critical of teammates, coaches, officials, administrators, volunteers or spectators. Negative comments and images, bullying, criticism and sexist remarks can be dangerous and harmful to people's wellbeing and reputation and the image of individuals and BSA.
7. Always assume the person you are talking or writing about will see what has been said or written. Ensure all comments are factually correct.
8. Use social media as a positive outlet to promote players, teammates, teams, clubs and others involved in Softball. BSA has a page on Facebook for members to interact with. Posting results and acknowledging individual and team performances on social media makes many people aware of team and individual achievements. That can have a positive effect for many people and should be used, encouraged and embraced wherever and whenever possible.

9. Do not tolerate or condone poor social media behaviour or actions. If you are aware of or observe poor social media behaviour or actions, do not accept it. There is no place for it in softball and it will not be condoned. You should remind people of their responsibilities when using social media and warn that action can be taken against them. In the instance of minors breaching the code of conduct, alert their parents to the situation. If you believe the breach is serious, report it to team, club or association officials.
10. Manage your account appropriately. Please consider your settings and account options to better control who can access and see your comments. If you are a coach it is reasonable to expect your players will look for your Facebook page and be reading your comments if you have not set up your settings to block this. This will potentially damage your relationship with your players and in turn your ability to get the best from them.

## **4.0 Branding and Intellectual Property**

It is important that any trademarks belonging to the BSA, BSA affiliated club or team are not used in personal social media applications, except where such use can be considered incidental – (where incidental is taken to mean “happening in subordinate conjunction with something else”).

Trademarks include:

- BSA and BSA affiliated club logos;
- Images depicting softball volunteers and employees, except with the permission of those individuals;
- Other BSA imagery including the representative team uniforms.

## **5.0 Official BSA blogs, social pages and online forums**

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for employee / association / club member use, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person at a club / association level has given written consent to create the page or forum.

Similarly, appropriate permissions must be obtained for the use of logos or images. Images of minor children may not be replicated on any site without the written permission of the child’s parent or guardian.

For official BSA blogs, social pages and online forums:

- Posts must not contain, nor link to, pornographic or indecent content;
- Some hosted sites may sell the right to advertise on their sites through ‘pop up’ content which may be of a questionable nature. This type of hosted site should not be used for online forums or social pages as the nature of the ‘pop up’ content cannot be controlled;
- BSA ‘employees’ must not use BSA online pages to promote personal projects; and
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

## **6.0 Breach of Policy**

SQI, its District Associations and clubs continually monitor online activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to the BSA.

Your actions on social media may have serious consequences. Negative comments and images, bullying, criticism and sexist or derogatory remarks not only impact negatively on the people they are about, they reflect badly on yourself, your parents and the people you represent.

If you are found to have acted improperly on social media by breaching any of the BSA code of conduct requirements or guidelines above regarding a softball related matter, you may be required to face a hearing of the BSA Executive or face a BSA Tribunal to explain your actions. Through such hearings, disciplinary action may be imposed such as a warning, a suspension or deregistration from the Association.