

Burlington Minor Football – Social Media Policy

Created: January 22, 2024



Mission: To bring to the community of Burlington a quality Football experience that positively impacts the lives of the participants and especially serves to deliver outstanding value to the children, parents/guardians and families.

Purpose: To establish guidelines for the appropriate use of Social Media by volunteers, players, staff, and members of the BMFA.

Assumptions/Definitions: The term “Social Media” includes any media used for web-based, digital or mobile social interaction. Social Media applications allow individuals to create and share user-generated content with others. Examples of Social Media include, but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X)
- Online video and photo sharing communities (i.e. YouTube, Flickr, Vimeo, Tumblr)
- Online discussion forums
- Website encyclopedias (i.e. Wikipedia)
- Online user review forums (i.e. Tripadvisor, Yelp!)
- Personal or corporate blogs
- Use of BMFA logo’s on any non approved sites, social media settings

Policy: This policy includes all public communications over Social Media by volunteers, players, staff and members of the BMFA that can be linked to or in any way associated (whether directly or indirectly) with the BMFA.

The BMFA recognizes and appreciates the value of Social Media and the importance of social networking. The BMFA also respects the right of all volunteers, players, staff and members of the BMFA to express their views publicly. At the same time, the BMFA is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect. All volunteers, players, staff and members of the BMFA must be aware of the dangers inappropriate use of Social Media can present.

Social Media Guidelines:

- A. The BMFA holds all volunteers, players, staff and members who make use of Social Media to the same standards as it does for all other forms of media, including radio, television and print.

Remember that even in your private communications, your actions, words and posts may reflect on the BMFA and may cause irreparable harm to the BMFA and its members. Always be courteous and respectful online.

- B. Comments, posts or remarks on Social Media of an inappropriate nature which are detrimental to the BMFA, a team or any individual associated therewith will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.
- C. It should be recognized that Social Media posts and comments are on the record and instantly published and available to the public. Anything you put online is there to stay. Everyone, including the BMFA, volunteers, players, staff, and members together with the community at large may access Social Media communications. Even if you remove a post, tweet or video, it may have already been saved or shared by another user. All such communications are discoverable under the federal laws of Canada and the provincial laws of Ontario.
- D. Refrain from divulging private or confidential information of a personal, team or BMFA related nature. Avoid revealing business or game strategy that could provide another team or individual a competitive advantage. Do not post information about player injuries.
- E. Posting the identity or images of any volunteer, player, staff or member of the BMFA on Social Media without that individual's express consent (Parental/guardian consent if a member is under the age of 18), may be punishable by law. Under no circumstances should any volunteer, player, staff or member of the BMFA post any photos of their players or teammates in a state of undress. Do not post, shoot video or take photos inside any dressing room or mode of transportation used by or in connection with the BMFA without the prior written consent and approval from the individuals whose images are captured.
- F. Individuals are considered solely responsible for their comments on Social Media.
- G. The BMFA is also governed by Football Ontario 's Code of Conduct and members are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this policy to ensure that all requirements regarding appropriate behavior and protocol are satisfied.

Social Media Violations:

The following are examples of conduct that are considered violations of the BMFA's. Social Media policy and as such, may be subject to disciplinary action by the BMFA.

- A. Any statement deemed to be publicly critical of association officials, volunteers, or staff or detrimental to the welfare of a member of a team or the BMFA.
- B. Divulging confidential information that may include, but not limited to:
 - Player injuries
 - Player movement
 - Game strategies
 - Any other matter of a sensitive nature to a player, or any other person affiliated with the BMFA in any way.
- C. Negative or derogatory comments about any team, the BMFA, volunteers, staff, programs, players, or members.

- D. Any form of bullying harassment or threats against players, volunteers, staff, members, or officials.
- E. Posting photos or images of players, members, volunteers, or staff without prior consent.
- F. Photographs, video, or comments promoting negative influences or criminal behavior including but not limited to:
 - Drug use
 - Alcohol abuse
 - Public intoxication
 - Hazing
 - Sexual exploitation
- G. Online activity that contradicts the current policies of the BMFA or any related associations.
- H. Inappropriate, derogatory, racist, or sexist comments of any kind.
- I. Online activity that is meant to alarm other individuals or to misrepresent fact or truth.
- J. Any instance of cyber bullying. For the intent of this policy, the BMFA defines cyber bullying as:
 - Sending mean or threatening emails or text messages.
 - Spreading gossip, secrets or rumours about another person that will damage that person's reputation.
 - Breaking into an email account and sending hurtful materials to others under an assumed identity.
 - Creating blogs or websites that have stories, cartoons, pictures, or jokes ridiculing others.
 - Creating polling websites where visitors are asked to rate individuals' attributes in a negative manner.
 - Taking an embarrassing photo of someone and emailing that photo to others or posting it on Social Media.
 - Engaging someone in instant messaging or other form of electronic communication, tricking them into revealing personal information and then forwarding that information to others.
 - Posting false or hurtful messages on online bulletin boards or in chat rooms.
 - Deliberately excluding others from instant messaging and email contact lists.

Discipline:

In the event of a reported violation of this policy, the BMFA along with the team(s) in question will investigate the violation. In the event a violation of the Social Media policy is determined to have occurred, disciplinary action will be taken by the Executive members of the Board of Directors of the BMFA. Such action may include suspension and/or removal from BMFA events for a determined or indefinite period of time. The BMFA recognizes that perpetrator intent and victim impact may differ in each case and reserves the right to assess disciplinary steps or sanctions to be taken in each situation on a case-by-case basis, having reference to

any previous disciplinary steps taken in similar cases. Any action by an individual or group of individuals that is considered potentially illegal will be reported to the proper authorities by a representative of the Executive members of the Board of Directors.

Acknowledgement:

By signing in the space below, and/or by checking the acknowledgement box in the attached registration form, you agree to abide by the policy, guidelines, and code of conduct as described in this document.

Parent/Guardian Name:

Signature:

Player:

Signature:

Coach/Member Name:

Signature: