

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

PURPOSE: To address the issue that one-on-one electronic communications and social media can increase the risk of abuse and grooming.

ENTIRE TEAM COMMUNICATION: Always copy another adult on any direct communication to a minor athlete or a group of minor athletes.

WHO (Collectively “Applicable Adults”):

- Adult members of a Covered Organization (USOC/NGB) who have regular contact with minor athletes (e.g., coaches, athletes, etc.).
- Adults authorized by the USOC/NGB to have regular contact with minor athletes (e.g., volunteers, chaperones, medical personnel, adult athletes, etc.).
- Adults authorized by the USOC/NGB to have authority over minor athletes (e.g., coaches, officials, volunteers, chaperones, medical personnel, adult athletes, etc.).
- USOC/NGB staff and board members.

THREE REQUIREMENTS

1

CONTENT

All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.

2

OPEN AND TRANSPARENT

No one-on-one communication between Applicable Adults (with authority over minor athletes) and minor athletes.

3

REQUESTS TO DISCONTINUE

If requested by a legal guardian, no electronic communication to minor athletes may take place absent emergency circumstances.

SAFESPORT BEST PRACTICES

- Create and use public/team pages exclusively for electronic communication.
- Maintain a list of minor athletes whose legal guardians have requested a discontinuance of electronic communications. This makes it easy to ensure no such communication takes place.
- Provide Applicable Adults official email addresses (e.g., individual@organization.org) that are managed by the USOC/NGB and instruct Applicable Adult to use for all USOC/NGB communication.
- Designate an Applicable Adult for each team/club/organization to be copied on all electronic communication.
- Use apps designed for team communication that allow all communication to be seen by all team members (e.g., Teamworks, TeamSnap, SIPlay, etc.).