



## Social Media Policy

### Policy overview and purpose

Social media is changing the way we communicate.

This policy has been developed to inform our football community about using social media so people feel enabled to participate, while being mindful of their responsibilities and obligations. In particular, this policy provides practical guidance allowing all parties to benefit from the use of social media, while minimizing potential risks and protecting those involved.

This policy assists to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all online activities related to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all Team Organizations with in the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.

This policy contains guidelines for the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association community to engage in social media use. It also includes details of breaches of the policy.

### Underlying principles

This policy compliment Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's core values and mission statement:

The mission of the "Mid-Penn Elite Youth Football Association" is to develop the foundational values and skills within our young athletes that are required to be successful in both football and in life. This focused development allows our athletes to be well prepared as the transition to their respective High School Programs. Each organization held within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association will properly foster a safe, fun, and positive environment for our players and properly represent the values of teamwork, sportsmanship and competitiveness.

Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association is responsible for all matters related to this policy.

### Coverage

This policy applies to all persons who are involved with the activities of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association, whether they are in a paid or unpaid/voluntary capacity and including:

- Members, including life members of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all Team Organizations with in the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association;
- Persons appointed or elected to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association boards, committees and sub-committees;
- Members of the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Executive Board;
- Support personnel, including team representatives, managers, sport trainers and others;
- Coaches and assistant coaches;
- Athletes;
- Referees, umpires and other officials;
- Team Organizations and all representatives of Team Organizations and;
- ANY OTHER PERSON TO WHOM THE POLICY MAY APPLY, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITES TO: SPECTATORS, FANS AND FAMILY MEMBERS.



## Scope

**Social media** refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate and/or share content via the internet.

This social media policy applies to platforms including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest, Yammer, etc)
- Video and photo sharing websites or apps (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo, Instagram, Flickr, Vine, etc)
- Blogs and micro-blogging platforms (e.g. Tumblr, WordPress, Blogger, etc)
- Review sites (e.g. Yelp, Urban Spoon, etc)
- Live broadcasting apps (e.g. Periscope, Meerkat, Facebook Mentions, etc)
- Podcasting (e.g. iTunes, Stitcher, Sound cloud, etc)
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare, etc)
- Online encyclopaedias (e.g. Wikipedia, etc.)
- Instant messaging (e.g. SMS, Skype, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Viber, etc)
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life, Xbox Live, etc)
- Online voting or polls
- Public, closed and private online groups, chatrooms, forums and discussion boards
- Any other online technologies that allow individual users to upload and share content.

This policy is applicable when using social media as:

1. an officially designated individual representing Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association on social media; and
2. if you are posting content on social media in relation to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all Team Organizations within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association that might affect Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all Team Organizations within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's business, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

NOTE: This policy does not apply to the personal use of social media where it is not related to or there is no reference to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association or its business, team organizations, competitions, teams, participants, products, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation. However, any misuse by you of social media in a manner that does not directly refer to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association may still be regulated by other policies, rules or regulations of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.

### ***Using social media in an official capacity***

You must be authorized by the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Executive Board of Directors before engaging in social media as a representative of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.

As a part of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's, community you are an extension of the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association brand.

As such, the boundaries between when you are representing yourself and when you are representing Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association can often be blurred. This becomes even more of an issue as you increase your profile or position within Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association. Therefore, it is important that you represent both yourself and Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association appropriately online at all times.



## **Guidelines**

You must adhere to the following guidelines when using social media related to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association or its business, products, team organizations, competitions, teams, participants, services, events, sponsors, members or reputation.

### ***Use common sense***

Whenever you are unsure as to whether or not the content you wish to share is appropriate, refrain from sharing the content.

When using social media, the lines between public and private, personal and professional, may be blurred. Remember, you are an ambassador for Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all of the Team Organizations within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.

### ***Protecting your privacy***

Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy.

When posting content online there is potential for that content to become publicly available through a variety of means, even if it was intended to be shared privately. Therefore, you should refrain from posting any content online that you would not be happy for anyone and everyone to see, even if you feel confident that a particular individual or group would never see it.

You should also be cautious about disclosing your personal details.

### ***Honesty***

Your honesty—or dishonesty—may be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading. If you are unsure, check the source and the facts before uploading or posting anything. The Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association recommends erring on the side of caution – **if in doubt, do not post or upload.**

Do not post anonymously, using pseudonyms or false screen names. Be transparent and honest. Use your real name, be clear about who you are and identify any affiliations you have.

If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. If you make an endorsement or recommendation about something you are affiliated with, or have a close relationship with, you must disclose that affiliation.

The web is not anonymous. You should assume that all information posted online can be traced back to you. You are accountable for your actions both on and offline, including the information you post via your personal social media accounts and closed or private groups you administer or actively participate in.

### ***Use of disclaimers***

Wherever practical, include a prominent disclaimer stating who you are affiliated with (e.g. member of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association or Team Organizations) and that anything you publish is your personal opinion and that you are not speaking officially. This is good practice and is encouraged, but it may not have legal effect.

### ***Respect confidentiality and sensitivity***

When using social media, you must maintain the privacy of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's confidential information. This includes information that is not publicly accessible, widely known, or not expected to be shared outside of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all of the Team Organizations within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.



Within the scope of your authorization by Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association, it is perfectly acceptable to talk about Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all of the Team Organizations within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and have a dialogue with the community, but it is not okay to publish confidential information of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association and all of the Team Organizations within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.

Confidential information includes things such as details about litigation, unreleased information and unpublished details about but not limited to: our board, team organizations, teams, coaching practices, financial information and trade secrets.

When using social media, you should be considerate to others and should not post information when you have been asked not to, or where consent has not been sought and given. You must also remove information about another person if that person asks you to do so.

Permission should always be sought if the use or publication of information is not incidental, but directly related to an individual. This is particularly relevant to publishing any information regarding minors. In such circumstances, parental or guardian consent is mandatory.

***Gaining permission when publishing a person's identifiable image***

You must obtain express permission from an individual to use a direct, clearly identifiable image of that person.

You should also refrain from posting any information or photos of a sensitive nature. This includes accidents, injuries, incidents or controversial behaviour.

In every instance, you need to have consent of the owner of copyright in the image.

***Complying with applicable laws***

Do not post or link to content that contains illegal or indecent content, including defamatory, vilifying, misleading and deceptive content.

***Abiding by copyright laws***

It is critical that you comply with the laws governing copyright in relation to material owned by others and Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's own copyrights and brands.

You should never quote or use more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and you should always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

***Discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying***

The public in general, and Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's members, reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view.

You must not post any material that is offensive, harassing, discriminatory, embarrassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, hateful, racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate.

When using social media, you are also bound by Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's values and Zero Tolerance Policy.



### ***Avoiding controversial issues***

Within the scope of your authorization by Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association, if you see misrepresentations made about Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association in the media, you may point that out to the relevant authority in your Team Organization. Always do so with respect and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is based on fact and does not discredit or belittle that party.

### ***Dealing with mistakes***

If Team Organization or a member of that Team Organization makes an error while posting on social media, be up front about the mistake and address it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses Team Organization or a member of that Team Organization of posting something improper, address it promptly and appropriately and if necessary, seek legal advice.

### ***Conscientious behaviour and awareness of the consequences***

Keep in mind that what you write and post is your responsibility, and failure to abide by these guidelines could put your position, membership, affiliation, and Team Organization at risk.

### ***Branding and intellectual property of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association***

You must not use any of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's intellectual property or imagery on your personal social media without prior approval from your Team Organization Representative as directed by the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Board of Directors.

Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's intellectual property includes but is not limited to:

- Trademarks
- Logos
- Slogans
- Imagery which has been posted on Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association official social media sites or website.

You must not create either an official or unofficial Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association presence using the organization's trademarks or name without prior approval from Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.

You must not imply that you are authorized to speak on behalf of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association unless you have been given official authorization to do so by Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Executive Board of Directors.

Where permission has been granted to create or administer an official social media presence for Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association, you must adhere to the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association branding, Bylaws, Zero Tolerance Policy, and this Social Media Policy.

### ***Policy breaches***

Breaches of this policy include but are not limited to:

- Using Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's name, motto, crest and/or logo in a way that would result in a negative impact for the Association, Team Organizations, teams, volunteers and/or its board members.
- Posting or sharing any content that is abusive, harassing, threatening, demeaning, defamatory or libellous.



- Posting or sharing any content that includes insulting, obscene, offensive, provocative or hateful language.
- Posting or sharing any content, which if said in person during the playing of the game would result in a breach of the rules of the game.
- Posting or sharing any content in breach of Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association's bylaws and Zero Tolerance Policy.
- Posting or sharing any content that is a breach of any local, state or Commonwealth laws, federal laws and child protective laws.
- Posting or sharing any material to our social media channels that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- Posting or sharing material that brings, or risks bringing Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association, its affiliates, its sport, its officials, members or sponsors into disrepute. In this context, bringing a person or organization into disrepute is to lower the reputation of that person or organization in the eyes of the ordinary members of the public.
- Any other listed statement in this social medial policy that can be considered a breach.

### ***Reporting a breach***

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content online relating to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association, Team Organizations members, volunteers, players, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy, you should report the circumstances immediately.

Directly contact your Team Organization's Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Associations representative and any member of the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Board of Directors.

Further information about reporting breaches:

- For a complaint about the misuse of social media relating to a match or competition that occurs either prior to, during, or after a game; refer to the PIAA Constitution and Bylaws and the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Bylaws
- For a complaint about the misuse of social media that is general in nature and/or ongoing and does not apply to a particular game; refer to Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Bylaws/Grievance procedure or contact your Team Organization's Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Associations representative and any member of the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Board of Directors.

### ***Investigation***

Alleged breaches of this social media policy may be investigated by the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Executive Board of Directors.

Where it is considered necessary, Mid Penn Elite Football Association Executive Board of Directors may report a breach of this social media policy to local, state, and federal law enforcement.

### ***Disciplinary process, consequences and appeals***

Depending on the circumstances, breaches of this policy may be dealt with at the discretion of the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Executive Board of Directors.

Any and all individuals or groups listed in the COVERAGE section of this Social Media Policy who breach this policy may face disciplinary action up to and including an immediate 5-year suspension from any type of participation or volunteer capacity within any sanctioned current Team Organization within the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association or any future Team Organization joining the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association.



### ***Appeals***

Any person who is sanctioned under a disciplinary process for breach of this policy may have a right of appeal at the discretion of the Mid Penn Elite Youth Football Association Executive Board of Directors.

### ***Related policies***

- Zero Tolerance Policy
- MPEYFA Bylaws
- PIAA Bylaws and Constitution
- Team Organization Member Protection Policy
- PA State Child Protection Policy
- PA Crimes Code
- U.S. Laws and Regulations

Other legal considerations that may be applicable include but are not limited to:

- Defamation
- Intellectual property laws, including copyright and trade mark laws, Privacy, confidentiality and information security laws
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Employment laws
- Advertising standards
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Information Privacy Act 2000*
- Equal opportunity laws
- Contempt of Court
- Gaming laws