



Tug of War Ireland Social Media Policy

Tug of War Ireland

Members Social Media Policy

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Purpose

Social Media has presented organisations such as ours with new and welcome communication opportunities. However, it has from time to time also presented challenges. This policy sets out Tug of War Ireland's expectations on the use of social media platforms. It is in no way intended to restrict normal interaction between members but to ensure that the benefits of such a facility are realised and the negative outcomes minimised.

Objective

To ensure that members understand the guiding principles and terms of use of social media platforms used on behalf of Tug of War Ireland and to encourage the development of an understanding of both the benefits and constraints in using social media.

Guiding Principle

When any individual identifies their association with Tug of War Ireland they are expected to behave appropriately and in ways that are consistent with Tug of War Ireland values and policies.

Background

The Internet provides many opportunities to communicate with other members and the community. Social media platforms provide the opportunity for members to inform the community of members activities. Members should be aware that the use of these platforms can also be abused and potentially damage the reputation of Tug of War Ireland; in extreme cases, this type of abuse can result in legal proceedings.

The web is not anonymous. Users of social media platforms should assume that all comments made by them will be traced back to them as individuals or to the organisation in general. When using social websites, members need to make a clear distinction between their activities as a member and their personal activities undertaken outside of Tug of War Ireland. The Internet is a fast-moving technology and it is impossible to cover all circumstances. This policy aims to provide guiding principles to help to exercise good judgment as well as providing specific detail on behaviour that must not be undertaken.

Scope

This policy covers all forms of social media and applies to Tug of War Ireland members when using any such media. It does not apply to personal use of social media websites when the member:

- Is not identifiable as a member of Tug of War Ireland.
- Makes no reference to Tug of War Ireland or issues relating to Tug of War Ireland.

Definitions

Tug of War Ireland Members – Club members, volunteers, employees and any individual authorised to represent Tug of War Ireland.

Use of Social Media Platforms – Any online activity where information is shared by an individual that might affect members of Tug of War Ireland.

It includes but is not limited to activities such as:

- Maintaining a profile page on one of the social or business networking sites (like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
- Commenting on blog sites 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 such as message boards or editing a Wikipedia page.

Usage

All current responsibilities of Tug of War Ireland members remain in force when using social media websites.

Online activity:

- Must not be used as a formal correspondence to the Committee(s) or Board. Please note that inappropriate correspondences will be removed. The Committee(s) and Board will not reply using social media. (If a member wishes to make a formal complaint about any issue, they should do so in writing through the appropriate channels).
- Must not interfere with Tug of War Ireland operational commitments.
- Must not use hostile or defamatory language; contain or link to libellous, defamatory or harassing content, including by way of examples, illustration or use of nicknames.
- Must not contain or link to pornographic or indecent content.
- Must not comment on or publish information that is confidential or proprietary to Tug of War Ireland.
- Must not disclose private or confidential information about Tug of War Ireland, it's members, guests, suppliers or employees.
- Must not bring the organisation into disrepute, pass judgment on Tug of War International Federation or other Tug of War Associations.
- Members may not use the Tug of War Ireland brand to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause or political candidate. It must be abundantly clear to any other user that any opinions expressed by a member are personal opinions only and do not represent the views of Tug of War Ireland.

Tug of War Ireland members posting material to social networking sites shall adhere to the following best practice guidelines:

- Think twice before posting: Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect both on the commenter and Tug of War Ireland. Search engines can turn up posts years after they are created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. If you wouldn't say it at a conference or to a member of the media, consider whether you should post it online.
- Strive for accuracy: Get the facts straight before posting them on social media. This is especially important if posting on behalf of Tug of War Ireland in any capacity.
- Secure permission: Only officers authorised to do so may speak on behalf of Tug of War Ireland. If you are posting material related to Tug of War Ireland or attempting to reflect the views of Tug of War Ireland, always consult with the Secretary of Tug of War Ireland first.
- Be respectful: Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the person posting the message and/or Tug of War Ireland.
- Identify your views as your own: Once you are identified as a member online, it should be clear that the views expressed are your personal views and not necessarily those of Tug of War Ireland.
- Rules: Become familiar with the terms of service and policies of sites and networks in which you participate.

Official Tug of War Ireland blogs, Social Pages and Online Forums

When using official Tug of War Ireland blogs, social pages and online forums, please be aware that, in addition to the responsibilities in relation to the general use of social media;

- Posts must not contain or link to pornographic or indecent content.
- Tug of War Ireland has the right to remove any content.

- Members must not use Tug of War Ireland online pages to promote personal projects or opinions.
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

Consideration towards other Members when using Social Networking sites

Social media websites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with other users. It is not appropriate to share Tug of War Ireland –related information in unauthorised social media forums without approval from the Secretary of Tug of War Ireland

Members must be considerate to other members, employees and content about a member, employee or Tug of War Ireland must be removed when requested by the Member, employee or the Tug of War Ireland. Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about Tug of War Ireland members and employees online. Any member found to be (or associated with) posting negative, obscene, false or defamatory comments of any nature on Facebook, Twitter or any other social media site or on the internet in general may face disciplinary procedures.

Adherence to Acceptable Usage Policy

The Administration (Board) has responsibility, in managing/moderating all social media communities/sites relating to Tug of War Ireland, to ensure that the acceptable usage policy is adhered to.

- Posts that should be deleted include but are not limited to: off–topic posts, spam, spam links, abusive posts, and expletive and hate language.
- Serious misinformation posted within the community should be corrected (and if it is defamatory, deleted).
- Users are required to register on the social media site; posts cannot be added by “anonymous” users. This can reduce spam and abusive comments, and in some cases, means Tug of War Ireland could hand over details in the event of litigation.
- If a user contests the decision to delete a comment, or block them, the Administration should not enter into a discussion within the thread itself, but move the discussion elsewhere e.g. via email.

Procedure for Set-Up of Social Media Sites

In line with all other communications, all social media presences set up on behalf of Tug of War Ireland must be approved by the Board of Tug of War Ireland.

Objectives must be outlined and set up is not permitted until full approval has been granted.

Breach of Policy

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action as outlined in Tug of War Ireland Constitution.

Juniors

Guidelines for Photographic/Filming Equipment

Juniors have a right to privacy and therefore their consent should be sought in relation to the use of personal data including images. Parental consent should also be sought, and Tug of War Ireland should receive signed permission from the junior Member parents or guardians for the recording of photographic and recorded images etc as part of the player’s application process. Information should also be provided as to how and for what purpose images will be used. Be aware that refusal of consent should not in any way limit a junior’s participation in activities.

Tug of War Ireland will take all necessary steps to ensure that young people are protected from the inappropriate use of their images in resource and media publications, on the internet and elsewhere. This is not to avoid parents/guardians taking photographs of their children but to ensure that best practice is put in place wherever and whenever photographs and recorded images are taken and stored.

It should be noted that having photographic and filming guidelines is not about preventing pictures being taken, but rather to ensure that only those who have a right to take photographs do so. These safeguards should still permit and facilitate the recording of relevant and suitable materials, should allow us to photograph the enjoyment gained by participating. A common-sense approach is required when deciding on what may or may not be appropriate to publish or record.

The key concerns regarding the use of images and photographs of juniors relate to:

- The possible identification of juniors when a photograph is accompanied by personal information and its inappropriate use thereafter.
- The inappropriate use, adaptation or copying of images for use in child pornography or illegal website.
- The taking of inappropriate photographs or recorded images of juniors.

When using photographs of Juniors, Tug of War Ireland will:

- Inform junior and parents that a photographer may be in attendance at an event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Ask for parental permission to use the members image and consult with the member about its usage.
- Ensure the content of the photograph focuses on the sport of Tug of War not on a particular junior.
- Not approve/allow photo sessions outside the events or at a Junior's home.

It should be noted that Tug of War Ireland has no influence on what photographs may be taken and published in local or national newspapers as such photography is covered by a different set of guidelines. Should Tug of War Ireland ever be unhappy with the publication of such photographs or images, it can be addressed with the individual newspaper or the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman. Photography and the recording of images in a public place do not generally require explicit or prior consent. However, if an event e.g. is taking place, involving juniors, in a public, private or local authority area, authorised personnel are entitled to request a person to desist from taking photos if you feel that such action or photography may be inappropriate. In general, individual juniors should not be identified with the exception being when they are being publicly acknowledged (e.g. an award or achievement), for which prior consent has been given.

Mobile Phones & Communication

Communicating with junior members, coaches and mentors should never place themselves in a compromising position by texting or communicating via social media sites with minors. All such communications regarding Tug of War Ireland activities should be sent via the parents or guardians of the junior, unless otherwise agreed with the parents/guardians, in writing.

In general, the following should apply when communicating with juniors:

- Use group texts or emails for communication among athletes and teams and inform parents of this at the start of the season, tournament or event. Any exception to this form of group texting can only be proceeded with following permission from parents/guardians.
- Do not communicate individually by text/email sites with juniors.
- Do not engage in communications with juniors via social network sites.

Best Practise Guidelines

Ask for the junior's and parental permission to use their image. This consent is included in the on-line membership form.

- All juniors featured in recordings must be appropriately dressed.
- The photograph or recording should focus on the activity rather than a particular junior.
- In general, no personal details relating to the young person should be revealed as accompanying materials to the photograph or recorded image, with the exception being where they are being publicly acknowledged (e.g. an award or personal achievement), for which consent has been given.
- Group and team photographs may be taken but it is not necessary to match a player's name with the position in which they may be standing or seated in the team photograph. This is a precautionary recommendation based on previous examples of misuse of photographs by those who sought to exploit the gathering of young people together in an enjoyable and fun environment.
- Clubs, coaches and volunteers should be permitted to use video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid and as a means of recording special occasions; however, care should be taken in the dissemination, storage and use of such material.
- Parents and spectators taking photographs/recordings should where possible seek permission in advance from Tug of War Ireland and should also be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state the purpose for their photography/filming.
- If Tug of War Ireland personnel are unhappy about any matter relating to such photography the permission granted should be withdrawn immediately.
- When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to an activity, ensure that they are clear about our expectations of them in relation to child protection.
- Any instances of the use of inappropriate images should be reported to the Child Protection Officer and/or appropriate designated person and also to the relevant statutory authorities if deemed necessary.

Members/Employees

Members/Employees have a right to privacy and therefore their consent should be sought in relation to the use of personal data including images. Information should be provided to the member/employee as to how and for what purpose images will be used.