



# GAELIC FOOTBALL & HURLING ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALASIA INC.

## 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, the Gaelic Football & Hurling Association of Australasia (GFHAA) recognises the benefits of social media as an important tool of engagement and enrichment for its members.

GFHAA and its affiliated State associations and Clubs in many instances have long histories and are highly respected units. It is important that the GFHAA's and State reputations are not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference the organisation.

When someone clearly identifies their association with the GFHAA/State 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 the GFHAA's/State'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 GFHAA/State members or employees where the GFHAA/State member or employees makes no reference to the GFHAA/State or related issues.

### 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to GFHAA/State members, staff or any individual representing themselves or passing themselves off as being a member of the GFHAA/State association.

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

- Maintaining a profile page on social or business networking sites (such as LinkedIn, Facebook, 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 the GFHAA/State as an organisation.

### 3.0 Guiding Principles

3.1 The web is not anonymous. GFHAA/State members and staff should assume that everything they write can be traced back to them.

3.2 Due to the unique nature of Gaelic Games in Australasia, the boundaries between a member's profession, volunteer time and social life can often be blurred. It is therefore essential that members make a clear distinction between what they do in a professional capacity and what they do, think or say in their capacity as a member of the GFHAA/State. The GFHAA/State considers all members of the GFHAA/State are its representatives.

## 2.

3.3 Honesty is always the best policy, especially online. It is important that GFHAA/State members think of the web as a permanent record of online actions and opinions.

3.4 When using the Internet for professional or personal pursuits, all members must respect the GFHAA/State brand and follow the guidelines in place to ensure the GFHAA's/State's intellectual property or its relationships with sponsors and stakeholders is not compromised (see 5.0 below), or the organisation is brought into disrepute.

### 4.0 Usage

4.1 For GFHAA/State members and staff using social media, such use:

- Must not contain, or link to, libellous, defamatory or harassing content e.g. distasteful references to a persons religion/beliefs, attacks on political beliefs, etc. This also applies to use of illustrations or nicknames;
- Must not contain defamatory words relating to another State or club or State/Club sponsor within the association
- Must not comment on, or publish, information that is confidential or in any way sensitive to the GFHAA, its affiliates or sponsors; and
- Must not bring the association into disrepute.

For GFHAA/State staff using social media, such use:

- Must not interfere with work commitments.

4.2 Furthermore, GFHAA/State members and staff may not use the GFHAA/State brand (see 5.0 below) to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause or political candidate; and it must be abundantly clear to all readers that any and all opinion shared are those of the individual and do not represent or reflect the views of GFHAA/State.

### 5.0 Branding and Intellectual Property (IP)

It is important that any trademarks belonging to GFHAA or any State association or Club 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:

- Club, State and GFHAA logos;
- Any recognised slogans;
- Images depicting GFHAA volunteers, staff and/or equipment, except with the permission of those individuals;
- Other GFHAA/State imagery  
or the official GFHAA leisurewear.

### 6.0 Official GFHAA/State Blogs, Social Pages and Online Forums

When creating a new website, social networking page or forum for staff/club member use, care should be taken to ensure the appropriate person at a Club/State 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 (apart from action shots e.g. photos from the Australasian Championships) may not be replicated on any site without the written permission of the child's parent and/or guardian.

For official GFHAA/State 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;
- GFHAA/State employees must not use GFHAA/State online pages to promote personal projects; and
- All materials published or used must respect the copyright of third parties.

### **7.0 Consideration towards others when using social networking sites**

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. GFHAA/State members and staff must recognise that it may not be appropriate to share photographs, videos and comments in this way. For example, there may be an expectation that photographs taken at a private GFHAA/State event will not appear publicly on the Internet. In certain situations, GFHAA/State members or staff could potentially breach the privacy act or inadvertently make the GFHAA/State liable for breach of copyright.

GFHAA/State members or staff should be considerate to others in such circumstance and should not post information when they have been asked not to or consent has not been sought and given. They must also remove information about another person if that person asks them to do so.

7.1 Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about GFHAA/State members or staff online.

### **8.0 Breach of Policy**

8.1 GFHAA, its State associations and Clubs as a matter of good governance should continually monitor online activity in relation to the organisation and its members. Detected breaches of this policy should be reported to the relevant GFHAA/State Secretary/President

8.2 If detected, a breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action from the GFHAA/State. A breach of this policy may also amount to breaches of other GFHAA/State policies. This may involve a verbal or written warning or in serious cases, termination of employment or engagement with GFHAA/State. GFHAA/State members may be disciplined in accordance with GFHAA disciplinary regulations as set out in the Rule Book.

### **9.0 Consultation or Advice**

This policy has been developed to provide guidance for GFHAA/State members and staff in a new area of social interaction. GFHAA/State members or staff who are unsure of their rights, liabilities or actions online or need clarification, should contact the Australasian or relevant State Secretary.

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