

**August 2015**

## **Athletics Nova Scotia Social Media Policy**

### **1. Introduction**

Athletics Nova Scotia (ANS) realizes that there are many benefits to social media. We recognize it allows us to increase communication between and among our members (i.e. athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents and employees) and partners. It can advance the promotion for a positive profile of our sport (track and field, cross country & road racing) and star athletes to a large audience.

Social media provides members the opportunity to raise the profile of our sport and help them connect with fans of the sport. ANS encourages and supports members to take part in social media to contribute to discussions and share their positive experiences. We recognize the importance of online conversation and respect the right to freedom of speech and social media serving for personal use as well.

ANS is committed to a sport and work environment that supports responsible and respectful use of social media by our members. All postings made to social media are treated as 'public,' comparable to comments or actions in a public forum or in front of a camera or microphone.

This policy describes ANS' commitment to providing a positive and respectful platform for our members and the public. This policy should be read in conjunction with ANS' Social Media Guidelines for Members, which provides the mechanism for our organization to deal with what we consider damaging messages quickly, responsively and effectively.

### **2. Policy Details**

#### **A) Scope**

This policy applies to all members of ANS including, but not limited to, their online behavior when serving as a representative of ANS and when participating as a sole individual.

Social Media takes many different forms including, but not limited to the following;

- Posted a comment on a blog
- Posted a review or rated a product
- Tweeted anything
- Participated in an online pole
- Posted a status update on Facebook
- Created a LinkedIn Profile
- Uploaded a video to Youtube
- Shared an image on Flickr
- Shared your location on Foursquare or the like

- Instagram
- Tumbler
- Snapchat

This policy covers social media messaging and actions that fall within ANS' organizational jurisdiction and includes, but is not restricted to, protection of individuals, our brand, our sport profile, and relationships with our sponsors and funding partners.

This policy refers to the use of a broad sweep of online activity including, but not limited to, social, professional and multi-media networks and live-blogging tools. It includes posts (including words, pictures and videos), shares and tweets initiated by an individual, as well as re-tweeting or reposting someone else's comment(s) to one's own social media account. Organizations and individuals are frequently re-learning that posting something on social media ensures the near-permanent existence of that material, thus we need to be especially careful about our social media use.

## **B) Standard of Conduct**

### **i) Messaging**

ANS endorses a high standard of behavior when using social media and does not condone any messages that:

- May constitute harassment, discrimination, cyber bullying or violence;
- Are hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals;
- Refer to controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects including, but not limited to, politics, sex, and religion;
- Are damaging to our brand and/or relationships with our stakeholders and funding partners;
- Divulge confidential or proprietary information that belongs to ANS;
- Fails to respect the privacy of others by disclosing personal information without consent.

### **ii) Posting**

Only designated individuals may post on the official social media sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc...) of ANS. All official inquiries about ANS must be answered through the appropriate staff/board members or their designate. Inappropriate messages made by members or public will be removed as soon as possible.

## **C) Imposing Disciplinary Sanctions**

Individuals that use social media irresponsibly or disrespectfully in a manner that may bring ANS into disrepute and/or is contrary to the Standards of Conduct for messaging and posting explained above could result in ANS taken disciplinary actions against said individual.

Disciplinary sanctions will reflect the severity of the infraction.

- Minor infractions can be single, largely unintentional breaches of this policy that generally do not result in harm to individuals and/or ANS.
- Major infractions can be single breaches of significance or multiple breaches that violate this policy, which result or have the potential to result in harm to individuals and/or ANS.

Disciplinary sanctions for minor infractions may include the following:

- Immediate removal and retraction of messages in question;
- Verbal or written reprimands;
- A verbal or written apology; and/or
- Any other similar sanction considered appropriate relative to the breach.

Disciplinary sanctions for major infractions may include:

- Immediate removal and retraction of messages in question;
- Formal, written notification of the nature of the violation against the policy;
- Verbal or written apologies; and/or
- Reporting to Athletics Canada for further action.

Any individual may appeal the decision and disciplinary sanctions by following the Dispute Resolution and Appeals Policy established by ANS. Disciplinary sanctions imposed internally by ANS do not preclude legal action that may be taken against an individual using social media irresponsibly.

### **3. Additional Pertinent Information**

This Social Media Policy is meant to cover existing and emergent online tools and network options. Compliance with this policy could be referenced specifically in ANS's agreement and/or contracts with members.

### **4. Policy Implementation**

The ANS Board of Directors have shared responsibility and accountability to implement and enforce this policy.