



Social Media Policy version 2026-27

We recognize that our members utilize social networking as a primary means of communicating with peers and connecting with members and those outside of our team. SUSA views social media as an important tool for communicating our team's successes and opportunities for athletic and individual development. We also view social media as a platform for receiving constructive feedback from the community. We base our social media content upon the following "pillars:"

- Educational Content
- News & Announcements
- Relationship Building
- Promotional Materials and Sponsorships

APPLICABILITY & DEFINITIONS

This policy applies to all members or persons involved with SUSA, including coaches, officials, volunteers, swimmers and parents.

Social media refers to all social networking sites, including but not limited to: personal blogs, X (formerly know as Twitter), Facebook, YouTube, SnapChat, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+, WhatsApp, Tumblr, TikTok, Reddit, Discord and Flickr. It also encompasses group messaging, texting or emailing as well as video chatting services such as Zoom, Google Duo, Google Hangouts, etc. File sharing features (such as AirDrop) are also included within this policy.

Any *personal* social media accounts created or administrated by SUSA members that can be reasonably interpreted as being representative of SUSA in any way* are subject to the contents of this policy.

*(using group or team names, nicknames or abbreviations, acronyms or symbolic representation of the team or its assets or employees)

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

- Members are expected to show respect to others, including members of SUSA and the wider community.
- Members are expected to give respect to the reputation and good name of SUSA.
- When using social media, members are expected to refrain from harmful actions:
 - Do not bully, intimidate, abuse, harass or threaten others, even jokingly.
 - Do not make defamatory comments.
 - Do not impersonate or falsely represent another person.
 - Do not use offensive, vulgar, profane or threatening language.
 - Do not post content or share messages or pictures that are hateful, threatening, pornographic or promotes violent or illicit behavior.
 - Do not post content that can be interpreted as racist, biased, or misleading.
 - Do not post content that would embarrass others.
 - Do not post content that harms the reputation and good standing of SUSA or those within it.
- When using social media, members are expected to ensure the following best practices:
 - **Respect the confidentiality of others.** Never post personal information about anyone else that could leave another person vulnerable to online abuse, bullying, identity theft or exposure to inappropriate content.

- **Be positive and always take the higher road.** When disagreeing with others' opinions remain appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that is becoming antagonistic, ask SUSA Coaches or club Directors for advice on how to disengage from the dialogue in a polite and respectful manner that reflects well on the team and does not create undue liability.
- **Encourage others to engage in positive interactions on social media.**

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Breach of this policy by an individual or group will be reviewed by a council of SUSA members and staff and dealt with according to the severity of the violation.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS

1. As a user of social networking sites, whether you are a child or adult, you may at some time have a concern about what you are seeing or being told about by another user. The nature of these concerns may vary, but any concerns connected to SUSA should be directed to SUSA's SafeSport Coordinator (when concerning minors) or to club leadership (SUSA Directors).
2. Whether you are a child or adult, if you are unhappy with content you are tagged in, 'untag' yourself or contact the person and ask them to remove the content. For documenting purposes, you may want to take a picture of the content. If you think the content breaks the terms of use of the social networking site, report it to them directly.
3. If you are asked to remove content, do so immediately.

GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC SUSA MEMBER POPULATIONS

Guidelines for Coaches and Volunteers aged 18-24

SUSA recognizes that many young coaches will have been members of the club before becoming a coach and will have been friends with their fellow members, some of whom will be younger swimmer members. It is therefore possible that they will have contact details for those members and will be friends with them on social networking sites. In these circumstances SUSA accepts that it would be inappropriate to require such friends to be removed from their social media contact lists. The coach is, however, advised to inform the Directors and/or Supervisory Coaches of any friends on their networking sites that they may also coach and to follow SUSA's Electronic Communication Policy and MAAPP guidelines.

Guidelines for Junior Coaches under 18

If the coach is a young person aged 15-17 and requires contact with other coaches aged 18 and over for professional reasons, written consent must be obtained from the parent/guardian. This consent must include the names of the individual adults with whom the junior coach will be receiving communication. The adults must agree in writing to keep contact with the young coach relevant to the young person's role within the club. All communications should be copied with an identifiable third person.

Guidelines for Swimmers Under 18

Do not ask your coach to be your friend on any social networking site. They will refuse, as to accept would be a breach of good practice. Use the internet responsibly and don't place yourself at risk. Never post or give out personal information via social media.

Always remember that any communications, comments, videos or photos that are posted on social media may be shared or seen by more people than intended. Never share any photos of yourself, family or friends that you would be embarrassed to have your family see. Coaches are obliged to share with authorities any communication that involves a threat to self or others.

On your personal accounts, never post content that would misrepresent SUSA in a derogatory manner. Even when on your own time, you are a representative of SUSA and people may interpret your online postings or social media interactions as though they were official SUSA statements or supported by the team.

Guidelines for Parents of Swimmers Under 18

Many parents are becoming 'friends' with their children on social media, perhaps for security reasons and to ensure the wellbeing of their child. This may give the parent access to the profiles of other children listed as 'friends' of their child. It would not be appropriate for SUSA to prevent a parent whose own child is a swimmer from using this form of protection for their child's online activities.

The parent concerned should not have direct contact with other swimmers through the social networking site, unless prior consent has been given from the child's parent. Where the parent has access to the child's social media accounts, they should not contact any other children under the pretense of being their child. Parents should be aware that posting any

content on a social networking site of a derogatory nature will breach SUSA's Social Media Policy and be subject to consequences.

Prevention is better than cure, so do your best to ensure the following:

- Limit the amount of personal information your child has on show
- Talk with your child about the importance of being wary of strangers
- Educate your child to be aware of potential online predators – some people may post false or misleading information about themselves including their identities
- Check privacy policies of social media accounts
- Be on the lookout for cyber-bullying
- Be aware of your child's online habits
- Guide them to appropriate sites