

# Cape Express Soccer Club

## Social Media and Electronic Communication Policies

### **OVERVIEW**

Online, social media and other electronic communication tools, such as text messaging among others, have become a prevalent and effective means of personal and professional communication, and have fundamentally changed the way many people and organizations interact. This policy sets forth expectations with respect to the use of online and social media, as well as other forms of electronic communications, by all Cape Express Soccer Club (CAPE EXPRESS) coaches, players, parents, staff, volunteers and administrators.

The term "social media", as used in this policy, encompasses a wide array of online media and communications, and their scope is constantly evolving. For purposes of this policy, the terms "online media" and "social media" are to refer to internal and external websites, blogs, online social networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), wikis, video and photo sharing sites (e.g., YouTube, SKYPE and Flickr), and other forms of personal online publishing and discourse. Policies regarding text messaging, email and individual telephonic communications are also covered by these policies.

Social media forums are typically public. Even when using social media for purely personal purposes, a person's public expressions might affect their professional identity and the organizational interests of CAPE EXPRESS and our members. Accordingly, anyone participating in social media must ensure that their participation is consistent with CAPE EXPRESS policies. That said, CAPE EXPRESS fully respects the interest our employees, contractors and coaches may have in participating in online and social media on a personal basis. What our employees, contractors and coaches do outside of work on their own time is normally their own business. However, activities of CAPE EXPRESS employees, contractors and coaches outside of work that affect the organization's reputation, the employee's, contractor's or coach's job performance, the safety of our players, or other CAPE EXPRESS personnel are within the scope of this policy.

Both on and off the field, safety and youth protection should be a key focus. CAPE EXPRESS is committed to be an advocate for youth and to keep children and their privacy safe, both online and off, and safety is always at the forefront of any considerations where social media usage is concerned.

With these objectives in mind, all CAPE EXPRESS staff, contractors, volunteers, members, administrators, and coaches must be familiar with and adhere to this policy, regardless of whether they personally use social media, and must share this policy with parents and players, as members, as appropriate.

## INTERNET AND COMMUNICATION POLICIES FOR COACHES

- All social media communications must be public, and all communications on or through them must be public. Being "public" means no private channels. For example, private Facebook groups, direct messaging or private invitations to personal Facebook pages, invite-only YouTube channels, or Twitter, direct messaging to individual players, and the like shall not be permitted between coaches and players. This enables administrators to monitor all communication and help ensure there is no inappropriate communication between coaches (including assistants and volunteer coaches) and players. This also serves to protect coaches.
- Abide by a "two-deep" policy for all communications and activities. This means at least two CAPE EXPRESS-affiliated adults, or one CAPE EXPRESS-affiliated adult and a parent, must be included or at least "copied" on all messages to players.
  - There should be no private messages and no -one-on-one direct contact through Facebook messages, Twitter, direct messaging, texting, Skype, chats, instant messaging (including but not limited to Google Messenger, AIM, and the like) or other similar messaging features provided through social, media sites. This two-deep policy also applies to all activities, outings, excursions, or other meetings between an adult and a player:
  - A coach may respond to a direct inquiry via text message or email from a player only regarding logistics of practice times, cancellations, schedules, etc. but our coaches should strive to include another adult on messages whenever possible.
  - Coaches and team representatives should only use text messages and email on issues that are soccer related and all communications should include a parent or guardian copied on the message where possible.
  - Coaches and team representatives should avoid cell phone conversations with players to the greatest extent possible, and cell phone communications should only be used when absolutely necessary, and should only be soccer related.
- Staff members, contractors, volunteer coaches, etc. may not be "friends" on Facebook with a player.
- If you post content on any social media site (e.g., Facebook, blog, discussion board or comment) and it has something to do with work for or activities related to CAPE EXPRESS or subjects associated with the organization or any of its members, you should include a disclaimer in substantially the following form: "*The postings on this site are my own, personal views and do not represent the views or positions of the Company, its customers, or personnel.*"
- When providing your contact information for personal business in social media, you should use your personal contact information (such as a personal email address), not your CAPE EXPRESS contact information.

- You should only provide your personal contact information (e.g., personal email, phone number, home or work address, etc.) for soccer related business and the two-deep policy should be applied to all communications.
- Respect privacy and confidentiality obligations when posting photos or videos. Before you post online video or photos that include images of players, it is your responsibility to obtain consent from their parent or guardian. If you fail to do so and they subsequently object, it is your responsibility to promptly take down or otherwise edit the posting in order to protect their privacy. CAPE EXPRESS will fully support those who wish to maintain their privacy in this regard.

### **INTERNET SAFETY FOR PLAYERS**

- Players shall not give anyone online, not even a coach or other parent volunteers, their phone numbers at home or school, their parents' workplaces, or the name or location of their school or home address unless they have their parents' permission first. Players shall never give their password to anyone but a parent or other adult in their family.
- Do not "friend" coaches on Facebook or other social media sites.
- Do not participate in "one on one" conversations via email text message, or telephone with a coach for anything other than soccer related business.
- Do not participate in "one on one" conversations via Skype, Facebook or other social media sites with a coach.
- If a coach or any other adult sends or shows a player an email or any type of direct message/wall post or text message with images or words that make the player feel uncomfortable, they should not respond. Instead, they should tell a parent or trusted adult about the message or what happened, and report the incident to the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors.
- Players shall tell a parent or guardian about any calls or texts they receive from a coach that discuss anything other than soccer related issues.
- If a coach or any other adult tells a player to keep what's going on between the coach and player a secret, the player shall tell a parent or guardian immediately, and the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors shall be informed.
- Players shall be careful to whom they talk to on the Internet. If someone starts talking about subjects that make them feel uncomfortable, the player shall tell a parent or guardian. Keep in mind that a person that is unknown to the player who is trying to talk to them on the Internet could be an adult posing as a kid.
- Pay attention...if someone tells a player things that don't fit together. If one time an online "friend" says he or she is 12, and another time says he or she is 14. That is a warning that this person is lying and may be an adult posing as a kid.

- Unless a player talks to a parent about it first, they shall not talk to anybody by phone or text message if they know that person only online. If someone asks them to call-even if it's collect or a toll-free, 800 number-that's a warning. That person can get their phone number this way, either from a phone bill or from caller ID.
- Never agree to meet someone, including a coach of CAPE EXPRESS, staff or volunteer, at any place off-line in the real world, unless a parent's permission is granted.

### **INTERNET SAFETY FOR PARENTS**

- Discuss internet safety, and the "Internet Safety for Players," section above, with your children.
- Let your children know that coaches, and other adults, should not communicate with them without your explicit knowledge and approval.
- Review your child's online and electronic communications as appropriate to minimize risk.
- Report any suspicious online or electronic communications to the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors as soon as possible.
- If appropriate, report any suspicious online or electronic communications to the appropriate authorities as soon as possible.

### **REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION OF SUSPICIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA, INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

- Any inappropriate social media content and all suspicious internet and electronic communications should be reported to the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors representatives - President, James Farrell or Vice President, Chris Brown  
The President, or Vice President in the President's place, will investigate all claims of inappropriate activity in direct coordination with the CAPE EXPRESS Board.
- Any reports of inappropriate activity will be reported to the legal committee of the CAPE EXPRESS Board, to contractual partners that require such information and to the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors.
- Reports of inappropriate activity may also be reported to law enforcement authorities and human services departments, as appropriate.
- Pending the investigation of reported suspicious/inappropriate activity, CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors may prohibit contact between a staff member, a coach, contractor or volunteer and all members of the club as deemed appropriate.
- Upon conclusion of the investigation, the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors, acting on the advice of the legal committee; shall make a determination regarding future participation by the individual(s) involved in the policy violation specific to club activities. In the event of suspension or

termination of a staff member, contractor, coach or volunteer the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors shall provide a means of appeal of the decision as required by the CYS KIDSAFE policies.

### **GUIDELINES FOR CAPE EXPRESS YOUTH SOCCER PERSONNEL**

- Social media must be monitored. A qualified staff member or volunteer should have the responsibility of regularly monitoring social media channels, and backup administrators/monitors should be designated so there is no gap in the monitoring.
- Be prepared to respond to negative or inaccurate posts only if a response is warranted. Some negative comments do not require a response, while others should be taken seriously and addressed. Factors such as the number of followers and the severity of the conversations should temper if and how you respond.
- Inappropriate posts or comments should be documented and removed immediately.
- Direct media inquiries to the appropriate person. Media inquiries coming through social media should be referred to the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors or a designee for an official response.
- Be respectful. When disagreeing with others opinions, remain appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it's becoming antagonistic, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly. Ask the appropriate personnel or the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors for advice on how to disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on CAPE EXPRESS.
- Safety and youth protection should be a key focus at all times. Any and all reports or allegations of inappropriate or potentially abusive behavior must be promptly reported to the CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors.
- The CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors or appropriate designee must thoroughly investigate any and all reports or allegations of inappropriate or potentially abusive behavior.

All CAPE EXPRESS personnel must comply with this policy. In the event CAPE EXPRESS perceives any online communication activities by an employee, coach, club member or volunteer as compromising the integrity of the organization or the safety of our members in any respect, CAPE EXPRESS may request such communications to cease. Such communications may be reported to authorities if deemed appropriate by CAPE EXPRESS Board of Directors or other members of the CAPE EXPRESS staff. Violations of this policy will result in corrective action including disciplinary action or dismissal when appropriate.