



## Front Range Barracudas

# Electronic Communication, Social Media & Photography Policy

### Purpose

The Front Range Barracudas ("FRBSC" or "the Club") recognizes the importance of electronic communication and social media in today's world. These tools help keep our families informed, celebrate our athletes' accomplishments, and support a connected team community. With these benefits also come responsibilities.

This policy establishes clear expectations for how coaches, athletes, parents, and volunteers use electronic communication, social media, and photography to ensure a safe, positive, and respectful environment for all members. This policy aligns with USA Swimming's Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP), the Cuda Codes of Conduct, and the Club's commitment to athlete protection.

### This Policy Document includes:

- Definitions
- General Standards for Electronic Communication
- Electronic Communication Requirements (MAAPP-Aligned)
- Social Media Policy
- Photography & Videography Policy
- Reporting Concerns
- Enforcement
- Acknowledgment & Agreement

### Definitions

**Applicable Adult:** Any coach, board member, or volunteer who has regular contact with or supervisory authority over minor athletes, including but not limited to: coaches, assistant coaches, board members, team managers, and meet coordinators.

**Minor Athlete:** Any athlete under 18 years of age.

**Unrelated Minor Athletes:** Any minor athlete who is not the adult's own child. Adults should exercise appropriate boundaries with all athletes, including relatives, godchildren, or children of close friends.

## 1. General Standards for Electronic Communication

All communication between coaches, board members, volunteers, parents, and athletes must be professional, transparent, and appropriate. Electronic communication is an extension of in-person interaction and must reflect the same high standards demonstrated at practice, meets, and team events.

### 1.1 Acceptable Purpose

Electronic communication should be used only for:

- Sharing information about team activities
- Providing scheduling changes, meet information, or logistical updates
- Team-related announcements or questions
- Communication that supports athlete development and safety

### 1.2 Prohibited Content

Regardless of the platform, electronic communication must never include:

- References to drugs, alcohol, or illegal behavior
- Sexually explicit, suggestive, or inappropriate language or images
- Discussions of an adult's personal life unrelated to team matters
- Derogatory, discriminatory, or demeaning content
- Hidden meanings, innuendo, or private/personal conversations between adults and unrelated minor athletes

### 1.3 T.A.P. Communication Standard

All communications should be:

- **Transparent:** Clear, direct, and free of secrecy or hidden meaning
- **Accessible:** Open to parents, the Head Coach, or additional staff; considered part of the Club's record
- **Professional:** Reflecting integrity, positive role-modeling, and language appropriate for all athletes

**Key Principle:** If a communication would be inappropriate in a face-to-face meeting with parents present, it is inappropriate electronically.

## 2. Electronic Communication Requirements (MAAPP-Aligned)

### 2.1 Open and Transparent Contact

When an Applicable Adult must communicate with a minor athlete:

- The athlete's legal guardian must be copied on the message
- If an athlete initiates a message privately, the adult must immediately copy the guardian in the response
- Teamwide or group messages must copy another adult (e.g., another coach or parent volunteer)

**Note:** Group communications sent through official team platforms (such as SportsEngine) satisfy the transparency requirement as these platforms include coaches and team administrators by design.

## **2.2 Hours of Communication**

Electronic communication with minor athletes must occur only between **8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.**, unless:

- Team practices or events are taking place outside of this timeframe
- An emergency exists
- The team is traveling for competition

## **2.3 Requests to Discontinue Communication**

- Parents/guardians may request in writing that their athlete not be contacted by the Club or Applicable Adults through electronic communication or included in social media posts
- The Club will honor these requests except in emergency situations

## **2.4 Prohibited Adult-Minor Online Contact**

Adults with authority over athletes may not:

- Maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes
- "Friend," "follow," or accept "friend requests" from minor athletes on their personal accounts
- Send private, direct, or instant messages to minor athletes through social media
- Engage in one-on-one communication without the required parent inclusion

**Important:** Any existing improper connections must be discontinued immediately.

# **3. Social Media Policy**

## **3.1 Acceptable Use**

Social media should be used to:

- Promote positive team culture
- Celebrate swimmers' achievements
- Share official updates from the Club

Members are expected to use social media responsibly, ethically, and in a way that reflects the values of FRBSC.

## **3.2 Prohibited Behavior: Cyberbullying & Cyberstalking**

FRBSC strictly prohibits cyberbullying or cyberstalking of any athlete, coach, parent, or official by any means. This includes—but is not limited to—Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, Snapchat, TikTok, messaging apps, forums, and gaming platforms.

**Cyberbullying includes:**

- Harmful or harassing text messages, emails, posts, or comments
- Spreading rumors online
- Sharing embarrassing photos or videos
- Creating fake profiles to target or harm someone

**Cyberstalking includes:**

- Persistent, unwanted messages
- Threats, intimidation, or hostile content
- Communication that causes emotional distress or disrupts participation in Club activities

**Examples of misconduct include communication that:**

- Harms a member or interferes with participation
- Negatively impacts emotional well-being
- Insults, demeans, or disrupts team activities
- Creates a hostile environment at practice or meets
- Causes significant interference in training or Club operations

Such conduct is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

## **4. Photography & Videography Policy**

### **4.1 Safety and Decency Standards**

All photography associated with the Club must reflect safe, respectful, and appropriate standards.

**Photographs must not:**

- Be sexualized or focus on private body areas
- Capture torn or displaced swimsuits
- Be taken behind starting blocks
- Show athletes climbing out of the pool in compromising positions
- Be taken in locker rooms, changing areas, or restrooms

### **4.2 Use of Images**

Parents/guardians acknowledge that photos or videos of athletes may be used for:

- Team website or social media
- Newsletters or promotional materials
- Meet photography or video streaming

Images are used for team spirit, celebration of accomplishments, and positive communication.

### **4.3 Parent Right to Opt Out**

Parents who do not want their athlete's photos used must notify the Head Coach directly via email. Parents may update their preferences at any time.

The Club will make reasonable efforts to honor all opt-out requests.

**Note:** The Club cannot control photos or videos taken and shared by other families on their personal social media accounts.

## **5. Reporting Concerns**

Any athlete or parent who experiences or witnesses inappropriate electronic communication, social media behavior, cyberbullying, or misuse of photography should report the concern immediately to:

- The Head Coach
- A Board Member
- A parent/guardian you trust
- USA Swimming SafeSport: 1-833-587-7233 (1-833-5-USASAFE)
- USA Swimming SafeSport Website: [usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport](http://usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport)

**When reporting, please preserve evidence** (screenshots, messages, posts), as this helps the Club conduct a timely and accurate review.

### **Investigation Process:**

The board Vice President and/or Head Coach will initiate an investigation upon receiving a report. Outcomes may include:

- Written warning
- Temporary suspension
- Removal from the Club
- Referral to USA Swimming or appropriate authorities

FRBSC takes all concerns seriously and is committed to a safe, positive, and supportive environment for every athlete.

## **6. Enforcement**

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action as outlined in the Club Code of Conduct, including suspension or dismissal from the team. The safety and well-being of athletes remain the Club's highest priority.

### **Acknowledgment & Agreement**

I have read and understand the Electronic Communication, Social Media & Photography Policy of the Front Range Barracudas Swim Club. I agree to abide by these guidelines and understand that failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action, including potential suspension or removal from the Club.

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_