



Electronic Communication Policy

PURPOSE

757swim recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While 757swim acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, we also realize that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors. 757swim minimizes these risks, going above and beyond the requirements set by USA Swimming and SafeSport.

GENERAL CONTENT

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and SafeSport requirements regarding Athlete Protection. For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drug or alcohol use
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional. Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: *"Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?"* or *"Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?"* With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is **Transparent**, **Accessible** and **Professional**.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate. The following points delve into all of the specifics and are taken directly from the [757swim Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy](#).

- I. **Content:** All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.
- II. **Open and Transparent:** Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult must Adopted: June 23, 2019 Last Reviewed on April 6, 2020 copy the minor athlete's legal guardian on any electronic communication response to the minor athlete. When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult must copy another adult.
- III. **Requests to Discontinue:** Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by 757swim, LSC or by an Applicable Adult subject to this Policy. The organization must abide by any such request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.
- IV. **Hours:** Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.
- V. **Prohibited Electronic Communication:** Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may "friend" 757swim and/or LSC's official page. Applicable Adults with authority

over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

FACEBOOK, TWITTER, INSTAGRAM, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

The Club has an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter. Coaches cannot retweet an athlete message post.

Coaches and athletes are not permitted to private message, instant message, or direct message each other through any social media site or IM method.