

## **CROSS COUNTRY BC SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY**

### **A. Introduction**

Cross Country BC (“CCBC”) recognizes that social media can be used for organizational purposes to increase communication between and among its Members and partners and advance the promotion and positive profile of our sport and star athletes to a large audience.

CCBC actively encourages and supports athletes to take part in social media to share their experiences. Athletes are one of our best sources of social media content and act as ambassadors for our organisation and our sport. As coaches, officials, staff, Members and Board of Directors, it is also a great opportunity to raise the profile of our athletes and help them connect with fans of the sport.

CCBC also recognizes the importance of online conversation and respects the right to freedom of speech and the use of social media for personal purposes.

CCBC is committed to a sport and work environment that supports responsible and respectful use of social media by its athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers, staff, Members and Board of Directors. 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 CCBC’s commitment to using social media responsibly.

### **B. Policy Details**

#### **1. Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, directors, coaches, athletes, officials, volunteers and Members of CCBC. It applies to online behaviour when serving as a representative of CCBC and when participating as a sole individual.

The policy refers to 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, 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. A tweet posted six months ago can be easily found by an intrepid researcher. A picture that is posted on Facebook never really goes away. These reasons underscore why we need to be especially careful about our social media use.

Today, social media is no longer limited to blogs and social networking sites. You have participated in social media if you have:

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

This policy covers social media messaging and actions that fall within CCBC's 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.

## **2. Standard of Conduct – Messaging**

Cross Country BC endorses a high standard of behaviour when using social media and does not condone any messages that:

- May constitute harassment, discrimination or violence;
- Are hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to an individual or group of individuals;
- Refer to controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects including 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 Cross Country BC; and/or
- Fail to respect the privacy of others by disclosing personal information without requisite consent.

## **3. Standard of Conduct – Posting**

Only communications staff employed by CCBC, or designate, may post on the official social media sites of CCBC unless written permission is given by CCBC.

All official inquiries about CCBC must be answered through CCBC's official communication platforms. An individual directly receiving requests from others (e.g., a journalist) regarding issues relevant to CCBC are to contact the Administration & Communications Coordinator and/or Executive Director prior to responding and in order to frame an appropriate response,

as required. Messages posted on personal online sites cannot be attributed to CCBC and must not appear to be endorsed by or originated from CCBC.

#### **4. Imposing Disciplinary Sanctions**

An individual that uses social media irresponsibly or disrespectfully in a manner that may bring CCBC into disrepute and/or is contrary to the standards of conduct for messaging and posting set above will be subject to discipline. Indiscretions through social media are subject to the same discipline if an individual made similar damaging comments or actions in a public forum or in front of a camera or microphone.

Disciplinary sanctions will reflect the severity of the infraction. Minor infractions are single, largely unintentional breaches of this policy that generally do not result in harm to individuals and/or CCBC. Major infractions are either single breaches of significance or repeated multiple breaches which violate CCBC's Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy and that result, or have the potential to result, in harm to individuals and/or CCBC.

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 correspond to those in CCBC's Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy and may include the following:

- Immediate removal and retraction of messages in question;
- Formal, written notification of the nature of the violation against the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy;
- Verbal or written apologies;
- Written reprimand;
- Probation or suspension;
- Monetary fine or payment of costs; and/or
- Any other sanction considered appropriate relative to the seriousness of the breach.

Any individual may appeal the decision and disciplinary sanctions by following the Dispute Resolution and Appeals Policy established by CCBC.

Disciplinary sanctions imposed internally by CCBC do not preclude legal action that may be taken against an individual using social media irresponsibly.

#### **C. Additional Pertinent Information**

This Social Media and Social Networking Policy is meant to cover existing and emergent online tools and network options.

Compliance with this policy could be referenced specifically in CCBC's agreements and/or contracts with athletes, employees, consultants, and Board of Directors. Expectations of this policy can be covered in media training provided by CCBC.

**D. Policy Implementation**

The Executive Director and Administration and Communication Coordinator have shared responsibility and accountability to implement and enforce this policy.

**E. Policy Exceptions and Exclusions**

None