

# Tolland Football Club Incorporated

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## **Tolland Football Club Social Media Or General Media Policy**

The Tolland Football Club acknowledge the emergence of new technology and communication mediums (Social Media), and wish to enable such Social Media to be used to benefit football and its participants, and to applaud achievements. However, participants within football need to be mindful of the possibility of Social Media being used inappropriately. Inappropriate use may occur unintentionally or when participants do not realise that their comments, once published are in a public forum, and are difficult to retract.

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content.

It is important that the reputation of the Tolland Football Club is not tarnished by anyone using social media tools inappropriately, particularly in relation to any content that might reference our club.

When someone clearly identifies our club and/or discusses their involvement in our club in this type of forum, they are expected to behave and express themselves appropriately and in the ways that are consistent with club stated values and policies.

This policy aims to provide some guiding principles to follow when using social media.

Social Media platforms include:

1. (a) social networking sites, including Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn;
2. (b) video and photo sharing websites, including Flickr and YouTube;
3. (c) micro-blogging sites, such as Twitter;
4. (d) weblogs, including personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications;
5. (e) forums and discussion boards, including those operated by Fox Sports, Four Four Two or The World Game;
6. (f) online encyclopaedias, such as Wikipedia; and

7. (g) any other web site that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

The club recommends the following:

- (a) do not include personal information of yourself or others in Social Media channels;
- (b) do not use offensive, aggressive, defamatory, threatening, discriminatory, obscene, profane, harassing, intimidating, sexually explicit, bullying, sexist, racist, provocative, hateful or otherwise provocative language in Social Media channels;
- (c) use your best judgment – do not publish something that makes you the slightest bit uncomfortable, and never write/ publish if you are feeling emotional or upset (or are intoxicated);
- (d) always ask for a person's permission before posting their picture on Social Media platform;
- (e) never comment on rumours, do not deny or affirm them or speculate about rumours in Social Media channels;
- (f) do not include information which is in breach of laws, court orders, undertakings or contracts; and
- (g) always use Social Media/ network forums to add value and promote football in a positive way.

When using any form of social media the club also recommends that you:

- Must not contain, or link to, libellous, defamatory or harassing content – this also applies to the use of illustrations or nicknames;
- Must not comment on, or publish information that is confidential in anyway;
- Must not bring the organisation or the sport into disrepute; or
- Must not otherwise be in breach of the FFA Code of Conduct.
- Posts must not contain, nor link to any illegal material, pornographic or indecent content;
- never comment on rumours, do not deny or affirm them or speculate about rumours in Social Media channels;
- Remember the web is not anonymous. Tolland members, officials, volunteers and supporters should assume that everything they write can be traced back to them.

## DISPARAGING MEDIA STATEMENTS

A Member, player or official must not make any statement in public, including any contribution to television, radio or print media that:

- (a) is disparaging or derogatory of a Match Official, opposition team or any Player or Official;
- (b) is disparaging or critical of FFA, or any FFA Statute or FFA policy decision, without reasonable basis or justification; or
- (c) comments on any matter the subject of a current hearing before the Match Review Panel, Disciplinary Committee or the Appeals Committee.

Where a statement made by an Official or a Player which, in the absolute opinion of the Football Administrator, constitutes a breach of making disparaging media statement, the Club is subject to sanction under this Code, independent of any sanction a Football Administrator has chosen to impose against the Official or Player who made the statement.

### What Happens If You Breach This Policy?

It is a breach of this Policy for any person or organisation to which this Policy applies, to do anything contrary to this Policy. The club executive classifies a breach of this policy to be either minor or major. Minor offences always start at step one while a major breach of policy goes straight to step two.

The Club may impose disciplinary sanctions on members, players, officials, volunteers or supporters in accordance with the stated recommendations of this policy not being implemented/followed and may implement the following maximum sanctions:

**Step one:** For minor incidents of breaching this policy the offender concerned is warned and their inappropriate behaviour explained by the Club representatives. This will always involve a clear warning not to repeat a further policy breach. The offender will clearly understand that if further policy breaches occur they will receive some sanctions stated in the Media Policy. The incident is recorded. A written notification will be supplied to the offender.

**Step two:** Following a second incident of any breach of this policy by the same offender (name already recorded) the offender will be given one of the sanction/s outlined below.

- (a) the imposition of a fine (maximum \$200);
- (b) suspension up to a maximum of 12 Matches; or
- (c) expulsion from the Tolland Football Club (delisted as a registered player or official)
- (d) ban from attending club matches, training sessions, club events/fund raisers or club outings (maximum 12 weeks/matches).

## **NOTICE AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS**

The Club may enforce the terms of this policy and invoke the sanctions only if it has given the party alleged to have infringed this policy:

- (a) reasonable details of the alleged infringement;
- (b) notice of possible sanctions; and
- (c) the opportunity to be heard in relation to the issues of infringement and sanction.

The imposition of a sanction is immediate or as otherwise notified by the party imposing the sanction.

If a Member disputes the sanction or purported action taken under this policy that

party may appeal in accordance with the Grievance Resolution Regulations (outlined in the club constitution) provided that it does so within 7 business days of notice of the sanction.

### **What Can I Do If I'm Issued With Any Of The Above Sanctions?**

Accept the issued sanction or seek advice from club officials, the Club MPIO officer or other sources to lodge an appeal as stated in the grievances procedures written in the club constitution.

TFC Committee  
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