

ST ALBANS FOOTBALL & NETBALL CLUB



Social Media and Digital Communication Policy

By being a member, player, parent or volunteer, you agree to adhere to the St Albans Football & Netball Club (STAFNC) Social Media and Digital Communication policy. The policy provides guidance for the appropriate use of social media by all members, players, coaches, officials, volunteers, parents, and supporters of St Albans Football and Netball Club.

Purpose

This policy establishes the standards of behavior expected from everyone involved with St Albans Football Netball Club (STAFNC) and provides a shared understanding of what it means to represent our club.

Policy Statement

St Albans Football and Netball Club recognises that social media and digital communication are important tools for connecting our football and netball community, celebrating participation and achievement, promoting club activities and sharing information with players, families, members and the broader community.

STAFNC is committed to using social media and digital communication in a way that:

- Protects the privacy, safety and wellbeing of our members
- Protects children and young people from inappropriate use of images or personal information
- Ensures appropriate consent is obtained before photographs or videos are shared
- Promotes a positive and inclusive club culture
- Provides clear expectations for members, players, parents, coaches, volunteers and committee members
- Protects the reputation and integrity of STAFNC
- Ensures digital communication is appropriate, respectful and consistent with the STAFNC Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy.

This policy should be read alongside the STAFNC Code of Conduct, Media Consent Form and all other club policies.

Scope

This policy applies to all people involved with STAFNC, including players, parents, carers and guardians, coaches and team officials, committee members, volunteers, members and anyone creating, managing or contributing content on behalf of STAFNC.

This policy applies to all forms of social media and digital communication including, but not limited to:

- Social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter/X)
- Messaging platforms (e.g., Messenger, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Heja)
- Video sharing platforms (e.g., YouTube)
- Forums, groups, pages, blogs, and podcasts
- Club communication including website, email and newsletter
- Other current or future digital communication platforms

It applies to any social media activity that directly or indirectly refers to the Club, its members, or its associated competitions.

Expected Conduct

All members, players, parents and volunteers are expected to use positive, respectful, inclusive and appropriate communications when engaging on social media platforms.

We do ***not tolerate any form of cyberbullying, harassment, abuse, or discrimination*** on social media and digital communication platforms. This includes:

- Negative comments about players, officials, opponents, coaches, or supporters
- Sharing of false, misleading, or confidential information
- Use of offensive, threatening, or defamatory language
- Behaviour that may bring the Club or its members into disrepute

Members are welcome to celebrate their involvement with STAFNC on their own social media account. Being a personal account does not remove a person's responsibility to comply with the STAFNC Code of Conduct. Members must:

- Respect the privacy of others
- Obtain appropriate permission before posting identifiable images of other people, particularly children
- Not publish confidential club information
- Not share private conversations via screenshots
- Not represent personal opinions as official STAFNC positions

Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including removal from Club teams or activities, suspension, or reporting to relevant authorities.

Child Safety

STAFNC is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all children and young people involved in our programs. We strictly adhere to the *AFL's Child Safe Policies* and the *AFL Barwon Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy*.

Media Consent and Privacy

STAFNC upholds our privacy responsibilities under the *Privacy Act 1988*. Consent from all STAFNC players and parents/carers/guardians will be appropriately sought in accordance with the club's Media Consent Form. STAFNC will take reasonable steps to ensure that:

- Personal information is not unnecessarily published alongside images
- Images are appropriate and respectful
- Images do not portray children in a vulnerable or unsafe situation
- Images are not used in a manner inconsistent with the purpose for which consent was provided
- Consent records are maintained appropriately

Players and/or parents/carers/guardians may withdraw media consent by notifying STAFNC in writing. Upon receiving a request to withdraw consent, STAFNC will take reasonable steps to:

- Update its consent records
- Avoid using future photographs or videos of that individual
- Remove identifiable content from official club platforms where reasonably practicable.

Photography and Videography

Photographs and videos taken on behalf of STAFNC will be:

- Relevant to legitimate club activities

- Appropriate and respectful
- Taken in public or appropriate sporting environments
- Consistent with child safety requirements
- Used only for an appropriate club-related purpose

STAFNC recognises that parents and families often wish to take photos and videos of their children participating in sport. Parents and spectators should:

- Respect the privacy of other children and families
- Avoid deliberately photographing or filming another child without appropriate permission
- Follow venue, competition and sporting body requirements
- Avoid recording sensitivity or distressing situations
- Not publish or distribute images of other children where they do not have appropriate consent to do so

Where concerns arise regarding photography or filming, STAFNC may ask a person to stop recording or remove content where the club has authority to do so.

Digital Communication

STAFNC recognises that digital communication can be necessary for team organisation and participation. Official club social media accounts may be used for sharing club news, events, schedules and achievements, but all content will be appropriate, monitored by authorised administrations and will comply with parental and personal consent requirements for photos and videos.

STAFNC supports the Australian Government's Social Media Minimum Age requirements, which came into effect on 10 December 2025. STAFNC will support these requirements as part of its commitment to child safety, wellbeing and responsible digital communication. STAFNC will not encourage or require children under 16 to engage in age-restricted social media that would be inconsistent with Australian law and platform requirements. STAFNC will refer to the current information published by the eSafety Commissioner when determining whether a platform is age-restricted.

Where communication involves children and young people, adults should use appropriate and transparent communication methods. Club representatives must not directly communicate privately with members under 16 through social media, personal messaging accounts, or one-to-one online conversations.

Where reasonably practicable:

- Communication should occur through approved team or club channels
- Parents/carers/guardians should be included in relevant communications involving younger players
- Adults should avoid unnecessary private messaging with children
- Communication should be related to legitimate sporting or club activities
- Communication should occur at reasonable times
- Language should remain appropriate and professional

Any concerns about inappropriate digital communication involving a child should be reported in accordance with the STAFNC Child Safety Policy.

Team group chats/channels/pages can be an effective way to communicate training, fixtures, team activities and other relevant information. Such group chats/channels/pages are strictly private to current players, coaches and appropriate/relevant club officials and are for over people 16 years and

older. Communication through these channels should remain respectful and relevant, with sensitive matters to be more appropriately discussed in private and formal communication channels.

Managing Content

STAFNC reserves the right to moderate its official social media platforms. Moderation decisions may be reviewed by the STAFNC Committee or an authorised delegate.

Online behaviour that impacts the safety, wellbeing or reputation of STAFNC may be addressed under this policy and the STAFNC Code of Conduct, even where it occurs outside official club platforms.

Ownership and Storage

STAFNC reserves the right to retain ownership and control of images and video footage captured, commissioned or uploaded through Club-operated or subscription-based platforms. The Club may store, retain and manage this content for legitimate Club purposes, including administration, communication, promotion, and record-keeping. Images and footage remain subject to applicable copyright, privacy and consent requirements

Complaints

Social media must not be used as the primary mechanism for lodging or resolving complaints about STAFNC, its members, coaches, players or volunteers. Complaints and grievances should be addressed through the club's established Grievance and Complaints process.

Responding to Breaches

A breach of this Code may result in action by STAFNC. The response will depend on the nature and circumstances of the behavior. This may include but is not limited to:

- Informal discussion or education
- Verbal or written warning
- Mediation or facilitated resolution where appropriate
- Behaviour agreement
- Restrictions on participation or attendance
- Suspension
- Removal from a volunteer, coaching or committee position
- Termination or cancellation of membership
- Referral to governing body - AFL Barwon, AFL or Netball Victoria
- Referral to police, child protection or other relevant authority where required or appropriate

STAFNC may move directly to more serious action where behavior is serious, repeated or presents a risk to the safety or wellbeing of others.

Need Help or Have Concerns?

If you believe content shared on social media violates this policy or puts a member of our community at risk, please contact the Club immediately at: info@stalbansfnc.com

Where a concern relates to child safety, members should follow the reporting pathway outlined in the STAFNC Child Safety Policy.

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