

Alberta Orienteering Association Social Media Policy

Updated and approved on: February 12, 2026

1. Purpose

The Alberta Orienteering Association (AOA) promotes a positive, inclusive, and respectful community free from maltreatment. This policy guides the responsible use of social media (including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, X, TikTok, YouTube, forums, blogs, etc.) by AOA members, participants, volunteers, coaches, officials, staff, and board members to support orienteering while protecting everyone involved. It aligns with the **Alberta Universal Code of Conduct***, which prohibits maltreatment through any means, including online and social media communications.

2. Scope

This policy covers both **official AOA accounts** and **personal/individual use** when referencing the AOA, its events, members, or the sport.

It applies to:

- a) All AOA members (athletes, volunteers, coaches, officials, event organizers, and board members)
- b) Any content related to AOA activities, events, or the orienteering community in Alberta

3. Key Guidelines

- a) **All** social media activity must align with the **AOA Code of Conduct*** and the **Alberta Universal Code of Conduct***.
- b) Be respectful, inclusive, and supportive.
- c) Maltreatment such as harassment, bullying, discrimination, abuse, or threats—including via online or social media—will not be tolerated and will be subject to the **Alberta Safe Sport Complaint Mechanism (ABSSCM)***.

Official AOA Social Media Accounts

- Only authorized individuals (e.g., designated board members or communications volunteers) may post on official AOA channels.
- Content should promote orienteering events, results, safety info, club news, and positive community stories.
- Ensure all social media communication is professional, unambiguous, and on-topic.
- Photos (videos of participants) require consent and should follow safe sport guidelines

* the up-to-date policies can be found on the AOA website: <https://www.orienteeringalberta.ca/safe-sport.html>

- Posts must be accurate, professional, and free of confidential information (e.g. no full names with images unless approved). Do not identify minor athletes on publicly available social media.
- Do not send friend requests to athletes.
- Never pressure athletes to send you a friend request or follow your social media accounts. If you accept a friend request from one athlete, you should accept these requests from all athletes. Be careful not to show favouritism on social media.
- Don't send personal messages to athletes or participants.

Personal Use of Social Media

When posting about Alberta orienteering or AOA events:

- Represent the sport and AOA positively.
- Exercise appropriate discretion when using social media for your own personal communications (such as with friends, colleagues, or people in authority) with the knowledge that your behaviour may be used as a model by athletes.
- Do not share confidential information (e.g., private event details, personal contact info, or complaints) that should go through official channels.
- Do not impersonate AOA or post as if you are an official spokesperson, unless authorized.
- Respect privacy: Do not tag or post identifiable images of others (especially children) without their or parental consent.

Social Media Guidelines for Athletes:

- You do not have to join a social media page or create your own account.
- Content posted on social media is considered public (depending on your privacy settings). In most cases, you do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy for any material you post.
- Content posted to social media is almost always permanent — consider that others may take screenshots (screencaps) of your content before you can delete it.
- Avoid adding people in authority (e.g., coaches, officials) to personal messaging and do not send one-on-one personal messages to people in authority.
- If you feel harassed by someone on a social media platform, report it to your coach or another person in authority within your organization or use the Independent Third-Party reporting mechanism on the AOA SafeSport webpage.
- Do not post pictures of, or allude to, participation in illegal activity,
- Model appropriate behavior in social media that befits your status as an athlete and a member of your organization
- As a representative of your organization, you have agreed to the **Alberta Universal Code of Conduct and AOA Code of Conduct*** and must follow it when posting material or interacting with others through social media.

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- Be aware that your public Facebook page, Instagram account, or Twitter feed may be monitored by your organization, coach, or another organization.
- Content or behavior demonstrated in social media may be subject to sanction under the **Alberta Universal Code of Conduct**.

4. Prohibited Conduct

The following is not allowed and may result in discipline under the **Alberta Universal Code of Conduct***, which covers maltreatment via social media/online means:

- Bullying, harassment, discrimination, threats, or any form of maltreatment (online or offline), including through social media, digital communication, or electronic means.
- Posting defamatory, obscene, hateful, disparaging, or harmful content related to the AOA or its members.
- Sharing inappropriate images or videos involving AOA participants.
- Using social media to retaliate, spread rumors, vent frustrations about events/races/decisions, or undermine officials or event organizers.
- Bringing the sport of orienteering into disrepute through online actions.
- Violating privacy or safe sport policies.

5. Reporting and Consequences

- Report concerns about social media misuse or potential maltreatment through the **Alberta Safe Sport Complaint Mechanism (ABSSCM)** available on the [AOA Safe Sport Webpage](#).
- Violations may be addressed under AB UCCM and ABSSCM , or other relevant AOA policies.
- Consequences may include warnings, suspension of membership, removal from events/roles, or other sanctions.

6. Best Practices for Everyone

- Think before you post: pause and consider if your content is kind, necessary, and helpful.
- Use respectful, friendly language—never say online what you wouldn't say in person.
- Avoid profanity or public criticism of volunteers or organizers. Orienteering relies on volunteer efforts—show appreciation instead.
- Protect participants' privacy. For example, use group shots with permission where possible, avoid tagging without permission, and report any concerning content.
- Promote the sport: share positive experiences, event photos, results, and encouragement **with consent**.

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References:

The referenced up-to-date policies can be found on the AOA website:

<https://www.orienteeingalberta.ca/safe-sport.html>

- Alberta Universal Code of Conduct (AB UCCM)
- Alberta Safe Sport Complaint Mechanism (AB SSCM)
- AOA Code of Conduct
- AOA Complaints, Dispute and Appeal Policy