

The Carolina Bears

Social Media & Digital Communications Policy

Purpose

The Carolina Bears recognizes the positive impact social media can have in celebrating our athletes, promoting our organization, and strengthening our community. We encourage responsible and respectful use of social media while protecting the privacy, safety, and reputation of our athletes, families, coaches, volunteers, and organization.

This policy applies to all athletes, parents, guardians, coaches, Team Moms, volunteers, board members, and any individual representing the Carolina Bears.

Our Standard

Every post, comment, photo, video, or message should reflect the values of the Carolina Bears.

Before posting, ask yourself:

- Is it respectful?
- Is it truthful?
- Is it helpful?
- Would I be comfortable if every member of our organization saw it?
- Does it reflect The Bears Way?

If the answer is no, do not post it.

Positive Use of Social Media

We encourage families to:

- Celebrate athlete accomplishments.
- Highlight teamwork and sportsmanship.
- Share positive experiences.
- Promote Carolina Bears events and community service.
- Encourage teammates.
- Support our sponsors and partners.
- Share official Carolina Bears announcements.



Prohibited Conduct

The following behavior is not permitted:

- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
- Threatening language.
- Discriminatory or hateful comments.
- Profanity directed toward others.
- Public criticism of athletes.
- Public criticism of coaches or volunteers.
- Public criticism of officials or league personnel.
- Sharing confidential team information.
- Posting false or misleading information.
- Posting content intended to embarrass another athlete or family.
- Encouraging conflict or division within the organization.

Parent Expectations

Parents are expected to:

- Address concerns directly with staff rather than through social media.
- Avoid discussing playing time, coaching decisions, or discipline online.
- Speak respectfully about all Carolina Bears athletes.
- Help maintain a positive reputation for the organization.
- Model appropriate online behavior for their children.

Disagreements should be handled directly with the organization—not Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, or other public forums.

Athlete Expectations

Athletes represent the Carolina Bears both on and off the field.

Athletes should:

- Treat others with respect online.
- Never bully or ridicule teammates or opponents.
- Celebrate teammates.
- Use appropriate language.
- Think carefully before posting.
- Understand that online actions have real-world consequences.

Athletes should never use social media to attack teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, or schools.

Coaches, Volunteers & Board Members

Leaders within the Carolina Bears are expected to maintain the highest level of professionalism online.

They should:

- Represent the organization positively.
- Avoid engaging in online arguments.
- Protect confidential information.
- Respect athlete privacy.
- Use good judgment when posting photos or videos.
- Maintain professional boundaries in electronic communications with athletes.

Communication with minor athletes should occur through parents or approved team communication platforms whenever practical.

Photography & Video

Parents and spectators are welcome to capture memories during games and events from designated spectator areas.

However:

- Respect the privacy of all athletes and families.
- Do not post images intended to embarrass or ridicule another participant.
- Do not enter restricted areas to obtain photos or videos.
- Official Carolina Bears media may be used for promotional purposes in accordance with signed media release forms.

Addressing Concerns

Concerns regarding:

- Coaching decisions
- Playing time
- Discipline
- Team operations

- Parent conflicts

should never be addressed through social media.

Families are expected to follow the Carolina Bears Communication Policy and speak directly with the appropriate coach or administrator.

Organizational Accounts

Only individuals authorized by the Executive Board may create or manage official Carolina Bears social media accounts.

Official announcements, schedules, fundraising campaigns, and organizational messaging should come only from approved Carolina Bears communication channels.

Consequences

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

1. Verbal or written warning.
2. Removal of inappropriate content.
3. Parent or athlete conference.
4. Suspension from team activities.
5. Removal from volunteer or coaching responsibilities.
6. Dismissal from the Carolina Bears organization for repeated or severe violations.

The Executive Board reserves the right to determine appropriate disciplinary action based on the severity of the violation.

Our Commitment

The Carolina Bears believe social media should strengthen our community—not divide it. We encourage every member of our organization to use digital platforms to celebrate achievement, promote positive sportsmanship, inspire others, and represent our athletes, families, and community with integrity.

Every post reflects our character. Every comment reflects our culture.

This is The Bears Way.