

## **NEW ZEALAND GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATED) SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY – LICENCED PERSONS**

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**Purpose** Social media such as blogs, Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook, can be effective. They are tools for professional and personal networking, engaging in public discussions on matters of interest, and staying in touch with family and friends.

However, licenced persons have various obligations to the New Zealand Greyhound Racing Association (**Association**). Careless use of social media could cause harm to the professional reputation of the Association, clubs, the greyhound racing industry, members, trainers, handlers, owners or you. For this reason, the Association has implemented this policy on appropriate use of social media.

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**Objective** The objective of this policy is to strike a balance between the Association's business needs, the need to protect its business interests, manage its professional obligations to other members, stakeholders, staff, and your right to engage in social media activities.

If you elect to participate in any social media activities, you need to be aware that there are obligations to do so responsibly. In particular, when using social media, you must ensure that your actions reflect the values and culture of the Association, and the greyhound racing industry.

This policy will help you to make appropriate decisions about your personal blogging, the content of your blogs, personal web sites, internet forums and postings on other shared websites. It also covers engaging with social media platforms on behalf of the Association.

The key objectives of this policy are:

1. to maintain the reputation, brand and positioning of the clubs, the Association and the racing industry as reputable and professional businesses; and
2. to preserve confidentiality.

When using social media you should be:

1. responsive to your audience;
2. respectful to the individuals and communities with which you interact;
3. careful about the content if it is likely to be offensive or unacceptable, regardless of its truthfulness or accuracy.

## Policy

### *Blogging and Social Media Activities*

Except where authorised by the Association, you are not permitted to make statements or give opinions in a blog, twitter or social networking or similar site, on behalf of the Association (unless authorised) or relating to a matter in which the Association is involved without first seeking and obtaining written approval from the Association.

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#### *Strict Confidentiality*

The Association expects you to show good judgement and professionalism when you use social media.

All information regarding members, stakeholders and licenced persons must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The consequences of any breach of confidentiality are likely to be serious.

Confidential, proprietary, or commercially sensitive information about the Association and clubs, including financial information, business and marketing strategies and staff matters must not be published and must also be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

It is important to remember that comments on social media or blogging platforms are available to anyone who has internet access, and that such information is not easily removable or retractable once published. Just as you would not discuss confidential information at social gatherings, in the street or other public places such as lifts, you must **never** communicate or publish any information through social media that is confidential or commercially sensitive to the Association or club.

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#### *Harmful Digital Communications Act*

The Association requires you to be aware of the Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015. This creates new offences for sending, posting, publishing, disseminating or communicating in any way a 'digital communication' with intent to cause harm to an individual (otherwise known as "cyber-bullying"). A 'digital communication' includes anything that is communicated electronically, such as texts, pictures, videos, instant messaging, and includes posts on social media.

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#### *Disparaging or Unprofessional Statements and Personal Opinions*

When engaging in social media activities you must never:

- disparage anybody connected with the Association, including our members, trainers, owners, stakeholders or our directors and staff (past or present);

- make statements that could suggest you are writing for, or expressing the views of the Association or any of our directors or staff; or
- reveal confidential or proprietary information about the Association, our directors, staff, or members, trainers, owners, stakeholders.
- You must ensure that you do not post material that is obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to another person or entity, including the Association, its employees, officials, clubs, other participants, contractors, and/or other related racing individuals or organisations.

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*Breach of this Policy*

This policy is made under and is subject to Association's Rules and Constitution (**Rules**). Clause 62.1(cc) of the Rules provides that a person commits an Offence if he/she: "*acts in contravention of or fails to comply with any provision of these Rules or any Regulations made thereunder, or any policy, notice, direction, instruction, guideline, restriction, requirement or condition given, made or imposed under these Rules*".

Breaches of this policy may constitute an Offence under clause 87 of the Rules. You may also be liable for a Penalty under clause 88 of the Rules.

Breaches of this policy may impact on your membership of your club and/or the Association.