

## Compliance Social Media Guide

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### Recruiting

**General Info vs. Recruiting Info:** Materials about Valparaiso University Athletics posted on our social media sites (including coaches' and staff members' personal social media accounts) must be general information not created for recruiting purposes. (NCAA Bylaw 13.4.1.4, 13.4.1.5)

- Information like Valparaiso University game scores, team activities/updates, coaches' activities/updates, etc. are generally permitted
- Posts about recruiting must be very generic in nature (e.g., it is OK to list locations visited)
  - **Permissible:** tweet example from a coach: "Wheels down in California, now let the recruiting begin."
- It is **NOT** permissible to comment on specific prospects, coaches, high schools or prospect facilities.
  - **Impermissible:** tweet examples: "Loved watching the Carver Central High School QB tonight." "The new Hills High School stadium is the best in Colorado."

**Comments Prior to Signing:** Before a prospect signs a National Letter of Intent or scholarship offer with Valparaiso University, we cannot publicly comment on the prospect except to confirm our recruitment of the prospect. We cannot comment on the prospect's ability, their potential contribution to our program, or the likelihood of the prospect signing with Valparaiso University. (NCAA Bylaws 13.10.2, 13.10.3)

- A prospect is any student in 9th grade and above, except in men's basketball and softball (7th grade and above).

**Examples of NCAA Violations:**

- Coach posted on Twitter an answer to a question that a fan posted to him about a prospect.
- Director of Operations commented on Twitter on the likelihood of a prospect signing with the institution (violation #1). The Athletic Director re-tweeted the original tweet (violation #2).
- Staff member commented on Twitter on a prospect's verbal commitment.
- The head coach re-tweeted a recruiting service tweet on a prospect's verbal commitment.
- Valparaiso University Facebook and Twitter account included a link to an article regarding a verbal commitment by a prospect.

Coaches cannot publicly identify a prospective student-athlete on social media (including the prospect's name, nickname, or other personally identifiable info (e.g., address)) until the prospect has signed a National Letter of Intent or submitted their financial deposit to Valparaiso University following an offer of admission.

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**Impermissible tweet examples:**

“In Denver to watch #40 prove he’s the best OLB in the division!”

“Talks with a prospect turned into a commit last night out of Kearney High School!”

**Recruiting Visits (including campus):** We cannot publicize (or arrange for publicity of) a prospect’s visit to campus. We cannot post photographs of prospects taken during camps or recruiting visits. (NCAA Bylaw 13.10.2.4)

**Examples of NCAA Violations:**

- Coach posted on Twitter a message about a prospect’s upcoming visit to the institution.
- Coach posted pictures on the team’s Facebook page of top prospects from the institution’s soccer camp.

**Endorsement of Prospect’s Team, Coach or Facility:** We cannot promote or endorse a prospect’s team, coach, or an athletics facility that is primarily used by prospects. A prior existing relationship with a HS/JC/Prep coach does NOT enable a Valparaiso University coach to have public communication with or endorse the HS/JC/Prep coach.

**Example of NCAA Violations:**

- Coach posted a comment on Twitter congratulating a club/traveling/AAU team for their performance at a tournament.
- Coach posted a comment on Facebook congratulating a high school coach for winning his/her 400th game.
- Coach posted a comment on Twitter wishing a high school good luck on the upcoming season.

**Communication with Prospective Student-Athletes**

**General Rules**

- We may “follow” a prospect on Twitter or “friend” a prospect on Facebook at any time, including a freshman or sophomore prospect.
    - An automatically generated electronic notification (e.g., accepting a friend request) cannot include any additional language in either the request or the reply.
  - We may communicate with junior and senior prospects or their relatives using private electronic communications (e.g., Twitter Direct Messages or Facebook Direct Messages).
    - Football, Cross Country/Track & Field, Swimming & Diving: May send private messages that are akin to email (e.g., Facebook Direct Message) but may not send instant messages (e.g., Facebook Chat).
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- We cannot communicate publicly with any prospects or their relatives (e.g., posts to prospect's Twitter page or Facebook wall, Facebook "Likes", Twitter "Favorites", public chat rooms, re-tweeting a prospect's tweet, or posting any other message to a prospect that is accessible to other users).

### Examples of NCAA Violations:

- A prospect's father posted a message on the coach's Facebook wall and the coach posted a comment in response.
  - Coach was exchanging private Facebook messages with a prospect when he accidentally posted to the prospect's wall.
  - Coach replied to prospect's Twitter page. He accidentally hit reply when he tried to send a Direct Message to the prospect.
- Boosters cannot communicate with a prospect.  
**Example of NCAA Violation:**
    - A booster exchanged 3-6 messages with a prospect's father via an internet message board.

### Endorsing Commercial Entities

- We cannot post a message/photo in which current student-athletes are promoting or endorsing a commercial entity or product.  
**Permissible:** Tennis team posts an occasional photo on Facebook of the team at Coal Creek with the message "Had a great team meeting at Coal Creek!"  
**Impermissible:** Tennis Team posts a photo on Facebook of the team at Coal Creek with the message "Valparaiso University Tennis says stop by Coal Creek for your morning coffee!"

### Current Student Athletes

- May communicate with prospects via social media as long as the communication is not at the direction of a Valparaiso University coach/staff member and is not related to the prospect's recruitment.  
**NCAA Violation:** Student-athletes posted messages on a prospect's Twitter account congratulating him on his verbal commitment.  
**NCAA Violation:** Student-athletes posted pictures of prospect's recruiting visit, and retweeted a picture from the visit that was initially generated by the prospect.
  - Cannot endorse a commercial product/entity. Student-athletes may provide their opinion of a commercial product or service as long as nobody is directing the student-athlete to do so and the student-athlete does not receive any benefit in conjunction with his/her opinion.  
**NCAA Violation:** A student-athlete posted a message on his personal Twitter account endorsing a corporate sponsor.
  - May not post confidential team information (injury updates, team morale issues, etc.).
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**Countable Athletically Related Activities**

- **Voluntary Workouts:** We cannot post messages/videos/photos/etc. regarding voluntary workouts, since coaches/sport staff may not observe voluntary workouts and strength/training staff may not report back to coaches on such workouts.
  - **NCAA Violation:** Institution posted a video on YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook of student-athletes participating in a voluntary open gym.
- **Off-Season Skill Instruction Workouts:** We cannot publicize skill instruction workouts (including basketball summer workouts). However, we may publicize off-season strength workouts conducted during the academic year.
  - **NCAA Violation:** Coach published the team's schedule of off-season skill instruction workouts on Twitter. Coach posted a photo of an off-season skill instruction workout.

**Basketball Closed Scrimmages:** We cannot publicize closed scrimmages prior to the scrimmage

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