

For the 2023-24 Season

Scope and Modification

Officials subject to this policy include members delineated in rule DOR 1.00.

U.S. Figure Skating reserves the right to modify this policy at any time.

Policy – All Officials

- 1) I agree to comply with the bylaws, rules, standards, codes and policies of U.S. Figure Skating as delineated in rule DOR 2.03.
- 2) I understand that per U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe Handbook, Adult Participants, including Officials, are prohibited from being friends with or following Minor Athletes on social media.
 - a) Additionally, I understand that it is not recommended for Adult Participants to join a personal social media page of Adult Athletes and vice versa.
- 3) I will not comment and/or react on the social media post of a skater/team you are going to officiate for in the current competitive season.
- 4) I will not comment about officials, skaters/teams, coaches, parents of skaters, club representatives, volunteers, or any related personnel, including employees of U.S. Figure Skating or other such decisions made by U.S. Figure Skating.
- 5) I will not engage in negative, critical, or unprofessional commentary or speculation on any specific evaluation, result, competition, or test session.
- 6) I will not post articles, pictures, and/or videos of skaters/teams.
- 7) I understand that communication among officials for learning purposes should not be done through the use of social media.
- 8) I understand that my failure to abide by this Social Media Policy for Officials may result in my suspension, or may forever exclude me, from all U.S. Figure Skating activities.

Reporting

Where can I report a violation?

- <https://www.usfigureskating.org/skatesafe>
- Click on "Report A Concern To U.S. Figure Skating" to access the i-sight online reporting form.

If filing an anonymous complaint, please ensure all relevant information is included in the report as the recipient of the report will not have your contact information to ask additional questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Interacting with Skaters/Teams

Q: Is it acceptable to be friends with or follow skaters/teams on social media?

A: Per U.S. Figure Skating's SkateSafe Handbook, Adult Participants, including Officials, are prohibited from being friends with or following Minor Athletes on social media. It is not recommended for Adult Participants to join a personal social media page of Adult Athletes and vice versa.

Articles, Pictures, and/or Videos

Q: Is it acceptable to share and/or post articles, pictures, and/or videos of skaters/teams?

A: No. This may give the impression that you are biased in support of a particular skater/team and that you would not be able to evaluate fairly.

Q: If I am assigned as a team leader or an official traveling/officiating internationally, is it acceptable for me to post pictures with the entire U.S. delegation?

A: Yes. Since you are focusing on the entire delegation, this is acceptable.

However, we do not recommend posting pictures to your personal social media accounts of yourself with skaters/teams in social situations, unless it is an official event. You should not single out any particular skater/team to congratulate on social media nor post a picture with a particular skater/team.

Q: A skater has just passed a senior moves-in-the-field test. After the test session, the skater requests a picture with the judges. Is it acceptable to be in such a picture?

A: No. It is not appropriate to take a picture with a skater when you have just officiated for the skater whether it be at a test session or a competition.

Q: An official at a competition had taken great pictures of skaters/teams while they were competing. The official is planning to post the pictures on his/her personal social media with the intent to promote the competition and the sport of figure skating. Is this acceptable?

A: No. This is a violation of the Social Media Policy for Officials. Officials need to eliminate the appearance of impropriety. Additionally, this may give the impression that an official is biased in support of a particular skater/team and that the official would not be able to evaluate them fairly.

Q: May I post pictures of the officials in the hospitality room during competitions?

A: No. Do not post pictures of any individual who has not explicitly given permission for you to do so. Additionally, do not post pictures from dinners or social activities that include alcohol and/or unprofessional behaviors.

Commenting

Q: Is it acceptable to congratulate a local organizing committee (LOC) on a well-run competition on social media?

A: Yes.

Q: Is it acceptable for officials to complain/vent on social media about officiating assignments and/or invitations?

A: No. This is a violation of the Social Media Policy for Officials as officials are prohibited from engaging in negative, critical, or unprofessional commentary or speculation on any specific evaluation, result, competition, or test session.

Q: May I comment and/or react (i.e., “like, love, etc.”) to a post on a skater’s personal social media page and/or on a team’s official social media page?

A: No. You should never comment and/or react on the social media post of a skater/team whom you are going to officiate for in the current competitive season.

Additionally, you should not comment and/or react on a skater’s/team’s post (whether or not you are going to officiate for the skater/team in the current season) if it involves:

- any intimate/sexualized behavior or
- any videos showcasing particular elements.

Q: I am offended by a skater’s/team’s costume. Is it acceptable for me to comment on their personal appearance on social media?

A: No. The policy states officials are not to engage in negative, critical, or unprofessional commentary.

Q: I am an adult skater as well as an official. Is it acceptable for me to comment on the competitors in my same group at a competition?

A: No.

Additionally, adult skaters who are also officials must defer to the role as an official in all social media actions.

Q: Is it acceptable for me to post my opinion about the calls of the technical panel and/or scores of the judges on social media?

A: No. It is unacceptable to comment on the calls of the technical panel and/or scores of the judges on social media. It undermines your peers and is completely inappropriate.

Q: Is it acceptable for me to identify myself as an official and comment in a live stream chat (e.g., YouTube chat) while the live feed of a competition is being shown?

A: No. It is unacceptable to identify yourself as an official and provide commentary in a public forum.

Miscellaneous

Q: Is it acceptable to post an invitation to a personal group meeting (such as a prayer group) if the invitation is a general post which is directed to no one individual in particular?

A: Yes. Personal posts on social media, which do not reference your position within U.S. Figure Skating and which do not purport to express the opinions of U.S. Figure Skating, will not violate the Social Media Policy for Officials.

Q: If a news reporter contacts me via social media, should I respond?

A: Yes, but only to explain that you are not an official spokesperson of U.S. Figure Skating. You should refer the reporter to headquarters. (*U.S. Figure Skating has three official spokespersons: the president, chief executive officer, and senior director of external relations*).

Q: Can I promote my skating dress business on social media?

A: No. You cannot serve as an official and also promote skating related goods or services (see the Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy for Officials).

Q: An official discovers a great clip of a +5 element from a figure skating themed YouTube channel. Is it acceptable for the official to repost and share this clip on their personal social media for the purposes of learning and sharing information with other officials?

A: No. Communication among officials for learning purposes should be done privately and not through social media.

Reporting

Q: Where can I report a violation?

A: <https://www.usfigureskating.org/skatesafe>

Click on “Report A Concern To U.S. Figure Skating” to access the i-sight online reporting form.

Q: If I file a complaint against an official who has posted something inappropriate on social media, can it be anonymous?

A: Yes. When filing an anonymous complaint, please ensure all relevant information (such as screenshots, whether the page is public or private, etc.) is included in the report as the recipient of the report will not have your contact information to ask additional questions.

As an official, you represent U.S. Figure Skating at all times. Act accordingly.