



# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

**Social media is a place where people like to talk about football and share opinions and ideas. There are various social media platforms, and it is a great place to connect with the football community. However, participants must be aware of FA Rules and Regulations when using their social media accounts. If a participant posts comments on social media that are improper and/or brings the game into disrepute, they may be liable to disciplinary action by the County FA.**

For reference, FA Rule E3.1 states:

*A Participant\* shall at all times act in the best interests of the game and shall not act in any manner which is improper or brings the game into disrepute or use any one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour.*

An "aggravated breach" and FA Rule E3.2 may apply if this behaviour includes reference to a person(s):

- Ethnic origin
- Colour
- Race
- Nationality
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Disability

Participants are deemed responsible for any posts on their accounts. If a post is made by a third party, this does not necessarily prevent disciplinary action being taken. In addition, reposting another post may lead to disciplinary action if the original post was improper. A participant can be charged under FA Rules as they are expected to act in the best interests of the game at all times – not just whilst participating at matches.

## COUNTY FA PROCESS

If the County FA receives a report of misconduct relating to a social media post, we will seek written observations from the participant alleged to have made improper comments. The County FA will consider all evidence and decide whether the participant is charged with a breach of FA Rule E3, issued a written warning or if no further action is taken.

By issuing this guidance we want to make sure that participants are using their social media accounts responsibly and are not posting comments that may constitute a breach of FA Rules. These guidelines in no way affect, supersede, alter or replace the FA Rules and Regulations.

\*A Participant means an Agent, Affiliated Association, Competition, Club, Club Official (which for the avoidance of doubt shall include a Director), Intermediary, Player, Official, Manager, Match Official, Match Official observer, Match Official coach, Match Official mentor, Management Committee Member, member or employee of a Club and all persons who are from time to time participating in any activity sanctioned either directly or indirectly by The Association.