

SOCIAL MEDIA

ESPN has the greatest collection of sports journalists in the world, many of whom are influential on social media. We value the reputation you have helped us build, and preserving it is vital to our business. Our engagement on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram should be civil, responsible, and without overt political or other biases that would threaten our or your credibility with the public. Do nothing that would undercut your colleagues' work or embroil the company in unwanted controversy. Apply to social platforms the same high standards, sound logic and common sense you employ on ESPN's platforms. We reserve the right to take action for violations of these principles. At ESPN, we have a shared responsibility to one another that accompanies the benefits we collectively and individually enjoy. We respect your intelligence, champion your creativity and trust your best judgment.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- + All social media activity by our journalists comes under these guidelines. Everything we post or comment on in social media is public. And everything we do in public is associated with ESPN.
- + Think before you tweet, post or otherwise engage on social platforms. Understand that at all times you are representing ESPN, and social sites offer the equivalent of a live microphone. Simple rule: If you wouldn't say it on the air or write it in a column, don't post it on any social network. This also applies to re-tweets and other social shares.
- + ESPN is a journalistic organization (not a political or advocacy organization). We should do nothing to undermine that position. We are committed to inclusion, tolerance and that which makes us different. But we must remember that public comments on social platforms will reflect on ESPN and may affect your own credibility as a journalist.
- + ESPN's focus is sports. While we acknowledge that our employees have interests beyond sports, it is essential that we not compromise our authority as the worldwide leader in sports coverage.
- + Do not break news on social platforms. We want to serve fans in the social sphere, but the first priority is to ESPN news and information efforts. Public news (i.e. announced in news conferences) can be distributed without vetting. However, sourced or proprietary news must be vetted by the Universal News Desk. Once reported on an ESPN platform, that news can (and should) be distributed on social platforms.
- + All posted content must be consistent with ESPN's employee policies and Editorial

Guidelines for Standards & Practices. This includes the existing Commentary and Media Criticism guidelines, and posts should not include any references to personal endorsements, promotions or business relationships.

+ You are strongly encouraged to seek advice from a trusted colleague or supervisor before tweeting or posting something that may conflict with our guidelines and damage your reputation. In the spirit of using these guidelines as a framework of support, there may be alternative actions or ESPN forums to accomplish the overall goal of your intended tweet or social post.

+ At all times, exercise discretion, thoughtfulness and respect for colleagues, business associates, the subjects you are writing about, competitors and fans.

+ Keep internal deliberations confidential. Do not discuss how a story or feature was reported, written, edited or produced; stories or features in progress; interviews conducted; or any future coverage plans.

+ Do not post any confidential or proprietary company information, references to ESPN policies or similar information on third parties who have shared such information with ESPN.

+ We realize this is a fast-moving space and these guidelines will be amended as warranted. Any violation of these guidelines could result in a range of consequences, including, but not limited to, suspension or dismissal. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

Political and Social Issues

NEWS

At ESPN, our reputation and credibility with viewers, readers and listeners are paramount. Related to political and social issues, our audiences should be confident our original reporting of news is not influenced by political pressures or personal agendas. News reporting on political or social issues should be consistent with these guidelines:

+ News reports should be accurate, appropriately sourced and approved through normal editorial channels. Original news reports should not include statements of support, opposition or partisanship related to any social issue, political position, candidate or office holder.

+ Writers, reporters, producers and editors directly involved in “hard” news reporting, investigative or enterprise assignments and related coverage should refrain in any public-facing forum from taking positions on political or social issues, candidates or office holders.

COMMENTARY

Outside of “hard” news reporting, commentary related to political or social issues, candidates or office holders should be consistent with these guidelines:

- + The subject matter should merit our audience’s interests, and be worthy of our time, space and resources; we should be in position to discuss the issue with authority and be factually accurate.

- + The topic should be related to a current issue impacting sports, unless otherwise approved by senior editorial management. This condition may vary for content appearing on platforms with broader editorial missions – such as The Undeclared, FiveThirtyEight and espnW.

- + Commentaries on relevant sports-related issues are appropriate, but we should refrain from overt partisanship or endorsement of particular candidates, politicians or political parties.

- + The presentation should be thoughtful and respectful. We should offer balance or recognize opposing views, as warranted. We should avoid personal attacks and inflammatory rhetoric.

- + Communication with producers and editors must take place prior to commentary on any political or social issues to manage volume and ensure a fair and effective presentation. These guidelines act in concert with all ESPN editorial standards & practices, including those governing social media and commentary, and apply on ESPN, Twitter, Facebook and other media.