



5-16-23
Approved Date: 5/16/2023
Date of Creation: 10/20/2020

Signed: _____

Blount County Public Library External Social Media Policy

Social Media Policy:

The Blount County Public Library (BCPL) uses various online social media services to provide public forums for sharing ideas, opinions, and information about library-related subjects and community information. These forums are intended to create welcoming and inviting online spaces where library users can interact with library staff and other library users while finding useful and entertaining information related to the library's activities, services, and resources. The BCPL regards online social media in the same way as its other information resources in accordance with its mission of serving the informational, educational, and leisure needs of all its patrons.

Definition of Online Social Media:

Online social media is defined as any website or application which allows users to digitally share information. Social media can include, but is not limited to, blogging, posts to community reviews, popular social networking websites, and patron ratings of library materials via the library's website.

Parental Controls and Privacy:

As with more traditional resources and the Internet, the Library does not act in place of, or in the absence of, a parent/guardian and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent/guardian may place on a minor's use of social media in any form.

The Library does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party site in any way other than to communicate library-related information with users on that site, unless granted permission by users for Library contact outside of that specific site. Users may remove themselves at any time from the Library's friends, fans, or followers lists, or request that the Library remove them. Users should be aware that the third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

Users are encouraged to protect their privacy by not posting personally identifying information, such as last name, school, age, phone number, or address.

Commenting:

Comments, posts, submissions, and messages are welcome on the BCPL social networking sites. While the Library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will

be regularly monitored for content and relevance (before publishing when possible). All content which contain any of the following will be removed:

- (a) Content that contains obscene content and/or language.
- (b) Content that includes personal attacks, insults, or threatening language that incites illegal activity or violence
- (c) Potentially libelous statements
- (d) Content that promotes discrimination of any kind, to include, but not limited to, the basis of race, age, religion, sexual orientation, ability and/or gender
- (e) Plagiarized or copy-written material
- (f) Private personal information published without consent of individual
- (g) Commercial promotions or spam
- (h) Organized political activity

Content which contains any of the following may be subject to removal:

- (i) Comments, photos, or other images unrelated to the BCPL library, it's mission, or its activities
- (j) Hyperlinks to materials that are not directly related to the discussion topic
- (k) Content is deemed to be off - topic or disruptive to the purposes of the site, its followers, and its sense of community and acceptance
- (l) Content might be posted by fake, impersonated, or anonymous users
- (m) Content contains an agenda that opposes the mission or values of BCPL

Liabilities and Participation

The BCPL assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any Library-sponsored social networking service, and does not endorse content outside of the pages maintained by the Library and the posts created by BCPL. Participation in BCPL social networking services implies agreement with all Library policies, including its Internet Usage Policy, and the Terms of Service for each individual third-party service.

Ongoing Use Evaluation

The role and utility of social networking services in relation to the goals and purposes of the Library will be evaluated periodically by the Library's staff and Board of Trustees, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.

Oversight and Engaging with Staff

BCPL aims to use social media as a method of communication between staff and community members. Due to varying hours of staff, BCPL can not always ensure that your messages, comments, or questions will be addressed immediately. Typically, staff of the BCPL aim to respond as timely as possible between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Questions, comments, or concerns that are sent through social media outside of the hours will be answered or addressed as soon as staff is able within the predetermined times.