

Social Media Policy

(Est. 06/20/2018; Revised 6/16/2021, 10/18/2023, 3/25/2026)

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of guidelines for the appropriate use of social media tools for the Madison Library District (the Library). Social media is to be used to promote a positive image of the Library, to inform and educate the community, and to build and maintain positive relationships with Library users.

B. Definitions

1. Social media refers to computer-mediated technologies that allow individuals and organizations to view, create, and share information, ideas, personal messages, photographs, videos, and other forms of expression via virtual communities and networks.
 - a. This includes, but is not limited to, the Library website, blog, or mass email, any third-party services, websites, programs, or applications used to share news, events, and information that is of note to residents, businesses, visitors, and other interested parties.
 - b. This policy is intended to address social media in general as advances in technology will occur and any new tools that are created are expected to be used in accordance with this policy.
2. Posting refers to any writing, image, video, audio file, or hyperlink that is downloaded, inserted, referenced, or placed upon a social media site.
3. The Online Administrators (Administrators) consist of the Library Director (the Director) and staff members assigned by the Director.
4. The term User indicates someone who is an active, participatory follower.

C. Administrator Access and Responsibilities

1. The Administrators are responsible for maintaining official Library social media, ensuring accuracy, consistency, and accountability.
2. Accounts should be used for the promotion of Library activities, events, information, and educational opportunities only.
3. Only Administrators are permitted to have administrative access to Library-related social media accounts. Administrators may create, add, or delete a social media account or online platform for the Library.
4. Administrators are responsible for the material posted on social media services and will act in accordance with state and federal law as well as the Library's policies and procedures.
5. Administrators shall respect copyright, trademark, and similar laws and use such protected information in compliance with applicable legal standards.

D. Limited Public Forum and Posting Guidelines

1. Submission of comments by members of the public constitutes participation in a limited public forum.
2. User content is the opinion of the specific author and does not necessarily represent the opinions of the Library or its employees. The Library is not responsible or liable for comments posted by Users of these social media tools.

3. By posting content, a User agrees to abide by the terms of this policy, and a violation of the terms may lead to legal liability for the user.
4. By posting content, the User agrees to indemnify the Library, its employees, and its representatives from and against all liabilities, judgements, damages, and costs, (including attorney's fees) incurred or that may arise.
5. Administrators reserve the right to monitor content for inappropriate material before it is published and modify or delete any messages or postings that is deemed to be in violation of this policy.
 - a. Inappropriate material may include but is not limited to:
 - i. Private or personal information, including phone numbers and addresses, or requests for personal information;
 - ii. Illegal material as defined by state and federal laws;
 - iii. Vulgar, profane, obscene, or otherwise offensive language or images;
 - iv. Communication that targets or disparages any ethnic, racial, or religious groups;
 - v. Defamatory, hostile, threatening, insulting, or disrespectful conduct or personal attacks;
 - vi. Potentially libelous statements;
 - vii. Plagiarized material or that which infringes on copyrights or trademarks;
 - viii. Comments in support of or in opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures of any kind, with the exception of information approved in advance by the Library Director regarding library-related matters;
 - ix. Advertising for services or products, including commercial, political, or religious messages unrelated to the Library or its social media postings;
 - x. Hyperlinks or other content deemed as spam;
 - xi. Comments not related to the content of the forum;
 - xii. Solicitation of funds.
6. Administrators are the final arbiters of what constitutes inappropriate material unless the material is considered illegal according to Idaho State or Federal Law. If the material is considered illegal, Administrators will act with due diligence to secure the information and promptly report it to the police.
7. Administrators will review comments posted on official Library accounts on third-party services for inappropriate material and will comply with the rules of that third-party service.
8. The Library reserves the right to ban or block users who violate this policy.

E. Employee Personal Use of Social Media

1. Library employees have the same right to self-expression enjoyed by members of the community as a whole when discussing matters of public concern, and employees are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites.
2. As public employees, Library employees are cautioned that speech made pursuant to official duties is not protected speech under the First Amendment

and may form the basis for discipline if deemed a violation of any policy of the Library. Ultimately, an employee is solely responsible for what the employee posts online. The employee may be personally responsible for any litigation that may arise should the employee make unlawful defamatory, slanderous, or libelous statements.

3. Employees should keep in mind the following best practices when posting content about library-related subjects and issues on personal time:
 - a. Employees may not, unless expressly authorized in writing, make statements on behalf of the Library on the employee's personal social media accounts.
 - b. If an employee wishes to make a work-related statement on personal social media accounts, the employee should consider including a disclaimer indicating that the opinions are the employee's personal opinions and do not represent the views of the Library.
 - c. Employees shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to which they have access as a result of their employment with the Library unless expressly authorized. In addition, employees are expected to respect the privacy of their co-workers and patrons and must take steps to protect the privacy and confidentiality of others.
 - d. Employees are not to use the Library's intellectual property such as trademarks, logos, letterhead, *etc.* when posting on social media or in any other actions, unless expressly authorized in writing. This includes posting pictures of anyone wearing apparel bearing the Library's name or logo when the activity in the photos may violate Library policies.
 - e. Employees shall not post material that may be construed to be discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory under local, state, or federal law about the Library, its employees, or patrons. Comments with any kind of language that is negative, mocking, condescending, *etc.* should not be made about patrons in general, about specific questions from patrons, or about patron behavior.
4. The Library does not endorse, monitor, or review the content of personal, non-Library related social media activity of its employees. However, employees shall have no expectation of privacy if accessing personal social media using Library e-mail, networks, servers, devices, and/or any other Library resources utilized as part of employment of the Library. The use of social media via public access points during personal time would be considered patron use and would not be monitored.

F. Trustee and Library Foundation Board Member Use of Social Media

1. Library trustees and Foundation Board Members have the same right to self-expression enjoyed by members of the community as a whole when discussing matters of public concern and as such are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites.
2. Trustees and Foundation Board Members are solely responsible for what they post online, and are personally liable for any litigation that may arise should they make unlawful, defamatory, slanderous, or libelous statements.

3. Trustees and Foundation Board Members should keep in mind the following best practices when posting content about library-related subjects on social media:
 - a. They may not, unless expressly authorized in writing, make statements on behalf of the Library on personal social media account. If they wish to make a related statement on a personal social media accounts, they should consider including a disclaimer indicating that the opinions are their personal opinions and do not represent the views of the Library.
 - b. They shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to which they have access as a result of their association with the Library unless expressly authorized. Consideration should be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of others as it relates to the Library.
 - c. They are not to use the Library's intellectual property such as trademarks, logos, letterhead, *etc.* when posting on social media or in any other action, unless expressly authorized in writing. This includes posting pictures of anyone wearing apparel bearing the Library's name or logo when the activity in the photos may violate Library policies.
 - d. They shall not post material that may be construed to be discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory under local, state, or federal law about the Library, its employees, or patrons. Comments with any kind of language that is negative, mocking, condescending, *etc.* should not be made about patrons in general, about specific questions from patrons, about interactions with staff of the Library, or about patron behavior.
4. The Library does not endorse, monitor, or review the content of personal, non-Library related social media activity of Trustees and Foundation Board Members.

G. Media Contact

1. All media inquiries for official Library response should be addressed to the Library Director.
2. Employees are not to speak on behalf of the Library unless they have express permission to do so.

H. Public Records

All Library social media usage is subject to the Idaho Public Records Law as found in Idaho code sections 74-101 through 74-126.

I. Open Meetings

All Library social media usage is subject to the Idaho Open Meeting Law as found in Idaho Code sections 74-201 through 74-208.