

# Clark County Public Library

## Social Media Policy

January 18, 2013

### **Philosophy & Purpose**

Clark County Public Library wishes to encourage dialogue and new learning opportunities with the community it serves while remaining a relevant information source for the community through the use of various web tools. To this end, CCPL has established social media sites to inform library users about library programs, events (including those co-sponsored with other organizations), and materials, and to encourage dialogue and the exchange of information and knowledge between users and library staff about these programs, events and materials. The library's social media sites may also be used to notify the general public of other library announcements.

The library's social media sites are not intended to be traditional public forums for the general exchange of ideas and viewpoints, but instead a limited forum for discussing library programs, events and materials.

Courts have recognized that libraries are limited public forums and as such, are only obligated to allow the public to exercise rights that fit with the purposes of the library. All postings related to library programs, events and materials are permitted, except as otherwise stated in this policy.

This policy governs the use of social media in three areas: 1.) public use, 2.) employee use and 3.) publication of comments on social media. For the purposes of this policy, professional use constitutes an employee who has been given the authority to use the official CCPL social media accounts to post content and/or comments using the CCPL name and logo. Social media means any forum for online publication and commentary, including blogs, wikis and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube and Pintrest.

### **I. Public Use**

The library is not responsible for or liable for the content of postings by third parties on any library sponsored social media site, and all postings, unless specifically designated otherwise, do not reflect opinions or positions of the Clark County Public Library, its employees or Board of Trustees. Comments posted to this page will be monitored during regular business hours.

By posting on the library's social media sites, users give the library permission to use their name, profile picture and the content of any posting or comment they make without any compensation to the individual who made the post or liability on the part of the library. This permission ends only if the user who made the post deletes his or her post.

For your convenience, this site may contain hypertext or other links to external internet sites that are not provided or maintained by the Clark County Public Library. Please note that the Clark County Public Library cannot guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of these external sites.

In addition to material posted by CCPL, this page may include ads and suggestions for other profiles to view selected by the social media site and links to third party sites included in user comments. The inclusion of these ads, profiles, and links is outside of the control of CCPL and are not an official endorsement of any product, person, or service, and may not be quoted or reproduced for purpose of stating or implying endorsement or approval of any product, person, or service. The Clark County Public Library does not receive any revenue from any of these links or sites.

### **II. Employee Use**

Employees may not use their personal social network accounts for official library business. Institutional accounts must be created to provide information/services for the organization.

Employees may choose to express themselves by posting personal information on websites, blogs, other social networking sites or chat rooms on the employee's own time. The library values creativity and honors personal expression.

However, employees who engage in social media including blogs or wikis for personal use must do so on their own time.

Employees must be aware that information they display or comments they make on library social media sites may be viewed by other users as representing official library sponsored information or comments. Employees should not represent their statements in an online social networking community as reflective of official library policy or position. Employees should demonstrate care if personal postings include the library's name or other identifying information that leads others to conclude that the poster is associated with the library. Employees may be subject to discipline if their comments are determined to be inappropriate by CCPL, as allowed by law. Any posting that violates the library's rights or the rights of other employees (inappropriate, offensive, harmful, or threatening) may cause both discretionary action in the workplace as well as legal action.

The library recognizes that the First Amendment protects a public employee's right, in some circumstances. However, keep in mind that when a public employee makes a statement on a social media site, the employee may not be speaking about a matter protected by the First Amendment. In some cases it may be difficult to distinguish between protected and unprotected speech, so each situation must be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Emails and other correspondence conducted over personal social media channels that is official business of the agency should be preserved and retained in a manner similar to other official documents. If you receive an unsolicited official contact through your personal email or social media presence, forward a copy of the correspondence to your official email account and respond from that platform.

### **Authority to Post using CCPL Name and Logo**

CCPL's Director or Public Relations Department can directly publish or comment via social media using the CCPL name and logo. Any other employee must obtain the permission of the Director or Public Relations Department and their supervisor before engaging in work related social media. Only with permission of the Director or Public Relations Department can other staff publish or comment using the CCPL name and logo.

Staff members who wish to contribute content (i.e. writing blog posts, tweets, Facebook posts, etc...) should submit a request to the Public Relations Department through the CCPL Social Media Submission Form.

### **Photos**

Remember that any content posted to social networking sites is available to others, and may be publicly visible by anyone. Therefore, the following guidelines should be observed when posting online:

- Ensure that the photos are appropriate for inclusion in a CCPL social media site
- Written consent is required for photos that will be used in CCPL promotional materials
- Ensure that the proper permissions are acquired before posting photos of individuals, parental permission is required for photos of children
- Provide photo credit when possible, to ensure that the photographer is recognized

### **III. Comments and Posts on Social Media**

Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time-protect your privacy and take care to understand a site's terms of service.

Be mindful of functions that allow the organization to be a "fan" of an individual or cause. Consider whether such an action would imply support for a political cause.

Like email, communication via library social networking websites is public record. This means that both the posts of the site administrator and any feedback by other employees or non-employees, including citizens, will become a part of the public record as is stated in section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

When writing in your official capacity, to not write anything that could appear to be legal advice. Legal issues should be handled through the library's regular procedures to avoid conflicts and other ethical problems.

To others online, there is no clear distinction between your work life and your personal life. Always be honest and respectful in both capacities.

Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. Comments that are received on blogs and other social networks will be reviewed prior to posting. CCPL wishes to encourage engaging dialogue with our fans/followers/likers and will post any comment that is appropriate. However, we do reserve the right to delete comments at any time, within the library's discretion. The library also reserves the right to ban or block users who have posted in violation of this policy. This would only be done in good faith to protect our readers from comments that include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Advertisements
- Spam
- Postings which contain obscene matter
- Postings which are disparaging, harassing, abusive, profane or offensive
- Hateful, threatening and/or pornographic postings which contain graphic or gratuitous violence
- Potentially libelous or defamatory postings
- Postings which contain privileged, proprietary or confidential information about any person, business or entity, including, without limitation, patrons, vendors, the library or library partners
- Postings which violate or potentially violate local, state or federal laws, including, without limitation, intellectual property and copyright laws
- Postings which discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, age, sexual orientation, creed, military status or ancestry
- Postings which are sexually harassing including, without limitation, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, sexual rumors that show hostility toward individuals based on gender, derogatory comments about individuals' body or appearance, unwelcome sexual compliments, innuendos, suggestions or jokes

As appropriate, comments will be professionally, respectfully and promptly addressed by the Public Relations Department (PR). If PR is unable to provide an independent answer, the necessary parties will be consulted as soon as possible to aid in providing an accurate and timely answer.

CCPL will not sell, distribute or disclose a user's name or personal information unless required by law. CCPL will not give or trade information to any third party vendors.

APKKPR12513

Board Approved - February 18, 2013