Social Networking Policy

Brandywine Community Library
Policy Updated: 3/27/25

Social networking

Social networking is defined as any website or application which allows users to share information. Social networking can include, but is not limited to, blogging, instant messaging, and wikis. Many social networking sites allow users of those sites to become a “friend”, “fan” or otherwise associate their own “profiles” or virtual presences with the Library’s profile on these sites. Examples of such sites are X, Facebook, YouTube, Tiktok, Instagram and blogging sites like Blogger and Wordpress. These resources allow members of the community access to some of the resources of an institution like Brandywine Community Library (BCL) without a visit to the physical library and allow the institution to reach its existing patrons as well as to serve the community in sharing information about library related materials, services, and activities. This document contains accepted uses and prohibitions regarding social networking activities.

Staff Use

BCL offers a presence on social networking sites to serve our community more broadly. As such, participating library staff should use these services to:

- Connect with patrons and the community regarding library services, programs, special hours, etc.
- Discuss/highlight library holdings, acquisitions, etc.
- Support BCL events, etc.
- Interact with other libraries and institutions

Library staff authorized to market the library and its services via social software must remain professionally oriented and conduct themselves professionally in accordance with library policies. The following list of prohibitions of use of the Library’s accounts is considered serious and violation of these guidelines may result in a range of disciplinary actions up to and including termination. (Employees should also refer to the section covering Social Media Use in BCL’s Personnel Policy).

When participating in social networking activities, library staff may not:

- Initiate chat with specific patrons
- Post unauthorized photos of BCL persons, events or locations
- Upload personal photos, videos, etc.
- Direct patrons to their personal Facebook pages, web sites, blogs, etc.
- Offer services or assistance independent of work time, or on a contractual basis
- Use social software to make political or religious statements

- Discuss other patrons, personnel or BCL affiliations
- Allow patrons or other unauthorized persons to access (login to) the library's account
- Create or remove any social media pages or accounts without Library Director approval
- Violate any of BCL policies, in particular those regarding professional conduct

Conduct

Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on BCL social networking sites. While BCL recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored and reviewed for content and relevancy (before publishing when possible). Inappropriate interactions should be reported immediately to administration.

All postings which contain any of the following will be removed and the poster may be barred from posting any subsequent messages to library social networking sites:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Organized political activity
- Photographs or other images that fall in any of the above categories

On all social network media, BCL shall endeavor to have its full Social Networking Policy available for people to read so that when a post is deleted for policy violation, the poster can be referred to the readily available document. The Policy shall also be posted on BCL's website.

The Library shall also be granted the right to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues. For example, a response to a YouTube book review may be quoted in a newspaper or on the library website.

Identifying information, other than first name or 'handle', will be removed unless prior approval is granted by the user. BCL 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 or review content outside the "pages" created by BCL staff.

BCL does not collect, maintain or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party site in any way other than to communicate with users on that site, unless granted permission by users for Library contact outside the site. Users may remove themselves at any time from the Library's "friends" or "fan" lists. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly. And as with more traditional resources, the Library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of this resource.