

Martin Public Library

Social Media Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the social media policy is to ensure effective promotion of library services, news, resources, projects and events to the public, and to ensure a high standard of customer service on social media. The overarching purpose of social media is to deepen our connections with library users and the Martin community. The library considers information and interactions generated on social media to be equal to other information resources at the library, and is meant to encourage conversations with staff and other library users.

Definition of Social Media

Social media is defined as any web application, site, or account created and maintained by the Martin Public Library that supports the library's social media purpose statement. These include, but not limited to, any online or mobile platform open to the public, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Yelp, LinkedIn, Discord, Tumblr, etc.

Establishment and Administration

The Martin Public Library may establish social media accounts with the permission of the Library Director. The manager of a department may assign an employee to manage social media accounts. The library may require a member of library management or IT to be added as account administrator in order to ensure continuity of access. The staff will maintain and edit the content of the library's sites to comply with all Library Policies.

Content of Posts

Posts should inform library users about services, resources, programs, events, promote library use, and encourage dialogue between users and library representatives. Social media posts, as with all library media releases, should be positive in tone and should reflect the values and viewpoint of the library rather than personal opinions. Reposting content from other sources is allowed if it seems of interest to our patrons.

Third-party Posts

The library is not responsible for the content of posts made by third parties, including customers, reviewers, advertisers, etc. Public posts by third parties do not reflect the positions of the library, its employees, or the City of Martin.

The library will not post on behalf of individuals or organizations unless it pertains to a program, partnership, or event co-sponsored by the library or in case of declared emergencies. During times of emergencies the Martin Public Library may elect to accommodate notices on social media serving the general public interest.

Usage Rules

The Martin Public Library welcomes the comments, posts, and messages of the community and recognizes and respects differences in opinion. However, all comments, posts and messages will be periodically reviewed and the library reserves the right to, but is not required to, remove any comment, post or message that it deems inappropriate or off-topic.

Content containing any of the following will be removed immediately from any Martin Public Library social media forum:

- ❖ Obscene content
- ❖ Hateful or harassing speech
- ❖ Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- ❖ Private or personal information, including phone numbers and addresses, or requests for personal information
- ❖ Potentially libelous statements
- ❖ Falsification of identity
- ❖ Plagiarized material
- ❖ Copyright violations
- ❖ Attacks on any ethnic, racial, economic or religious groups
- ❖ Spam or other commercial, political or religious messages unrelated to the library
- ❖ Solicitation of funds
- ❖ Endorsements of specific brand name products or services for advertising or marketing purposes, including political advertisements or endorsements.
- ❖ Comments, links or information unrelated to the purpose of the forum
- ❖ Any comment that violates the library's code of conduct
- ❖ Any images, links, or other content that falls into the above categories

The Martin Public Library is not responsible for or liable for any content posted by any participant in a Library social forum who is not a member of the library's staff.

Users should have no expectation of privacy in postings on Library sponsored social media sites. By using such sites, you consent to the Library's right to access, monitor, and read any postings on those sites. Users must understand that social media is permanent, retrievable, and public.

The Library asks that individual user complaints be addressed directly to the Library Administration so they can be addressed quickly and specifically. Complaints or negative comments concerning the library will not be deleted, but will be engaged like any other patron complaint. Staff may move the discussion to a private venue such as chat or messaging. Social Media is not the mechanism used by the Library to document or address library user problems and concerns, or to influence Library policy, procedures, or programs.

The Library reserves the right to ban or block users who have posted in violation of this policy.

Staff Usage of Social Media

Guidelines

The library does not restrict the right of employees to use personal social media outside of work. However, employees must be aware that statements made on social media pursuant to their official duties may be viewed by others as library or city-sponsored information or opinions. Employee behavior online, as offline, is subject to the disciplinary guidelines in the City of Martin Personnel Policy Manual.

Staff Guidelines for Official Library Social Media Accounts

Staff members should check the account and respond to messages and/or posts in a timely manner. Social media should be updated at least once a day during operating hours.

Responding to users

Managing social media is not just publishing posts. It requires responsiveness and engagement. Patrons expect quick responses.

As stated in the policy, negative comments or complaints should not be deleted. Instead, engage with the patron as we would with any other complaint. Move the discussion to a private venue. For example:

Thank you for telling us about your experience in the library. We want to address your concern—please check your direct messages.

Complaints and negative posts may be deleted if they are harassing, obscene, personally name staff members, or meet the other criteria in the policy. If you delete a post, still send a direct message to the poster explaining why. For example:

Thank you for telling us about your experience in the library. We removed your post because it contained language that violates our social media policy. However, we would like to address your concern.

Approved and Adopted by the Martin Public Library Board of Trustees February 21, 2021

Reviewed and approved: April 22, 2024