

Portsmouth Public Library Social Media Policy

POLICY

Portsmouth Public Library (the “Library”) maintains social media accounts for educational, cultural, civic and recreational purposes. Library social media accounts provide a limited (or designated) public forum to facilitate the sharing of ideas, opinions and information about library-related subjects and issues. The Library’s social media is intended to create a welcoming and inviting online space where community members will find useful and entertaining information and can interact with Library staff and other Library users. Comments are moderated by Library staff and the Library reserves the right to remove comments that are unlawful or off topic. Staff who contribute to or moderate social websites on behalf of the library must follow specific rules to maintain the reputation of the library as well as to protect the First Amendment rights of citizens.

Definition of social media for the Library

Social Media is defined as any web application, site or account that facilitates the sharing of opinions and information about library related subjects and issues.

It includes, but is not limited to such platforms as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Library Staff Responsibilities

It is expected that all content on Library-sponsored social media (or done by Library staff on Library work time on community software) will be professionally presented. Writers and content contributors are to check facts, cite sources, avoid copyright infringement, present balanced views, acknowledge and correct errors, and check spelling and grammar before making a post live.

Writers are expected to put a “best foot forward” on the Library activities they discuss online. When Library staff members speak or write on the job, online or elsewhere, they are speaking for the Library, and the content they provide should present the Library positively.

Library administration reserves the right to review content before it is posted and to modify, remove or prohibit any messages or postings that it deems to be inappropriate.

The following content shall be avoided by Library staff writers:

- Personal attacks, insults or threatening language
- Libelous and/or defamatory statements
- Plagiarized material
- Private and personal information
- Comments unrelated to the content of the forum, and/or hyperlinks to material not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Information shared with library staff and stakeholders that is in draft form or is pending publication

Staff members with questions about the appropriateness of content they are considering posting will review their work with their supervisors before making the content live. Supervisors will make decisions based on this policy.

Personal Social Media Activity

- Links from Library social media to employees' personal accounts are not allowed
- Views expressed on personal accounts are those of the individual alone and do not represent the views of the employer. Library personnel expressing such views must not identify themselves as associated with the Library.
- No posting of confidential information or information that has been shared with staff but is still in draft form and pending publication is allowed.

Moderating Public Comment

Social media library web applications that allow users to comment are limited public forums.

Public comments and other contributions moderated by staff responsible for Library social media must ensure that public contributions comply with Library rules.

Social Media Comment Guidelines for Moderators

The Library uses social media to form connections with the public by encouraging conversations online.

The Portsmouth Public Library social forums are **limited public forums**. The Library requires that users stay on topic and abide by the law. The following list (not exhaustive) is grounds for removing comments to a Portsmouth Public Library web application.

1. Contains copyrighted material
2. Comment is completely off topic
3. Commercial material / SPAM
4. Duplicated posts from the same individual
5. Obscene posts
6. Specific threats against persons or things.
7. Libelous comments about a private citizen
8. Images

Staff should remove inappropriate links from comments.

Comment authors have the right to ask Library Administration to review postings denied under these guidelines.

Adopted by Library Board of Trustees

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