



Social Media Policy

Approved by the Joint Board of Library Trustees 12/5/2019

Purpose

The purpose of the social media policy is to ensure effective promotion of library services, resources, and events to the public, and to ensure a high standard of customer service on social media.

Hamilton-Wenham Public Library Social Media Accounts

Establishment and administration of social media accounts: The Hamilton-Wenham Public Library staff may establish social media accounts with the permission of the library director. For the purpose of this policy, social media refers to any online or mobile platform open to the public, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

Content of posts: Posts should inform library users about services, resources, programs, or 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. More information on posts can be found in the “Social Media Guidelines Procedure” document attached.

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 towns of Hamilton or Wenham.

The library reserves the right to delete public posts or comments if they include spam or advertisements, hateful or harassing speech, obscenity, personal disparagement or defamation, or any other comment that violates the library’s code of conduct.

Complaints or negative comments should not be deleted, but should engage like any other patron complaint. Staff may move the discussion to a private venue such as chat or messaging.

Staff Usage of Social Media

Designated staff may maintain library social media accounts as part of their assigned duties. 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 town sponsored information or opinions. All users are expected and required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Town of Wenham’s policies and standards for conduct.

Social Media Guidelines & Procedures

Purpose

These guidelines are meant to give any staff member the tools they need to manage a successful social media account, in keeping with the library's social media policy.

Guidelines

Types of accounts:

Library staff can establish, with the director's permission, any social media accounts which they are able to maintain at a high, professional standard. Social media platforms can be considered if staff believe it would better reach the community.

Social media accounts should be updated at least once a day. Staff are encouraged to make use of post-scheduling options and software, which allow multiple days' worth of posts to be planned at once. All social media accounts should be kept active with regular posts and quick responses. Accounts that cannot be regularly updated should be suspended.

Unique content for each social media account/service is considered best practice. For example, do not use Twitter to only tweet a copy of each Facebook post.

Content of posts:

Language for social media posts should be conversational and light in tone (though still professional). Do not copy and paste the full text of a press release; post a flyer or graphic or link and only briefly describe the material.

You may repost content from other sources if it seems of interest to our patrons. Please consider the source when doing so; social media users can be very quick to judge a repost/retweet as an endorsement of political or social positions. If in doubt ask the library director.

Add graphics or images to posts whenever possible, as these are much more likely to get users' attention. Please remember to use non-copyrighted images or images given from presenters that you have received permission to post.

Responding to users:

Managing social media is not just about publishing posts; it requires responsiveness and engagement. Staff responsible for library social media pages must check accounts every day they work and respond to messages and/or posts in a timely manner. Patrons using social media 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, preferably by moving 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 and also alert the director. For example: *Thank you for telling us about your experience in the library. We have removed your post because it contained language that violates our social media policy.*