MELROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Social Media Policy

Purpose and Mission

In keeping with the Melrose Public Library's (MPL) mission, the library staff selects carefully chosen social media tools as an important means of collaboration, communication, and information exchange between MPL staff, library users, and the general public.

MPL has established social media accounts primarily to increase users' awareness of upcoming library services, resources, and programs (including those co-sponsored with other organizations), and to encourage dialogue and the exchange of information between users and library staff.

Library social media offerings are intended to create a welcoming, safe, and inviting online space where library users will find useful and entertaining information.

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

This policy is adopted in addition to the Melrose Public Library Internet Use Policy as well as MPL's endorsement of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks.

Definition of Social Media for MPL

MPL recognizes that new tools and technology will emerge which will have useful application in the library setting; thus, this policy addresses social media in general. Social media is defined as any web application, site, or account that facilitates the sharing of opinions and information about library related subjects and includes any material created by the library and maintained by library staff.

Public Terms of Use

User discussion and contribution on library social media sites is subject to the Public Terms of Use as well as the Comment Guidelines laid out in this policy. MPL staff will provide a link to the Melrose Public Library Social Media Policy on its website and applicable social media profiles, as well as having a hard copy available in the library upon request. MPL has no affiliation with third party sites or software. MPL is not responsible or liable for the content of postings by third parties on any MPL sponsored social media site, and postings do not reflect the opinions or positions of MPL, its employees, volunteers, or Board of Trustees. Library staff evaluates information posted online, but sharing or linking to content online does not mean that the Library endorses or is affiliated with the entirety of the content or content creator. User discussion and contribution shall adhere to existing regulations and policies as well as applicable local, state, or federal laws, including copyright laws.

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Comment Guidelines

Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on the library's social networking sites. By choosing to comment on MPL social media sites, public users agree to the following terms. While MPL recognizes and respects differences in opinion, comments may be moderated by MPL staff. The library respects diverse viewpoints and encourages relevant, thoughtful discussion. MPL does not discriminate against any views: however, the library reserves the right to remove comments, photos, videos, or other images. Particularly those that are unlawful, not library related, or contain any of the following:

- Abusive, vulgar, profane, offensive, or harassing language;
- Plagiarized or copyrighted material including use of shared files without consent of the copyright owner;
- Insults, threatening language, or personal attacks of any kind;
- Racist content, hate speech, or offensive terms that target specific individuals or groups;
- Potentially libelous statements and/or defamatory statements;
- Private and personal information published without consent;
- Organized political activity: person campaigning for elected office, ballot proposition, or the promotion or opposition of any political party;
- Duplicate posts from the same individual;
- Comments unrelated to the content of the forum, and/or hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion;
- Content that constitutes or encourages illegal activity;
- Commercial solicitations and/or promotions of services or products;
- Spam of any kind;
- Obscene posts.

This list is not exhaustive and any violation may result in the post being removed and/or the poster being barred from posting any subsequent messages to MPL's social media sites. When and where applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

Patron Privacy on Social Media

Patron privacy is of critical importance to the Melrose Public Library and it is a foundational principle guiding the library's social media policy and practice. It is included in the American Library Association's Code of Ethics and the Library Bill of Rights. The Internet is an unregulated medium and as technology changes rapidly, MPL cannot guarantee a completely secure digital environment but will work hard to protect the privacy of patrons. Information sent to the library's social media sites may be monitored, captured, or altered by others with the appropriate equipment and technology. Users need to understand their own responsibility to protect personal information. The library does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party social media site in any way other than to communicate with users on that site. All content on MPL's social media is subject to the Commonwealth's public records laws, e-discovery laws, and all information technology and records management policies.

Complaints of any nature must be made in writing to the Library Director.
Policy approved by Melrose Public Library Board of Trustees (September 10, 2019).