
Social Media Policy

The Merrimack Public Library uses various online social media services to provide public forums for sharing ideas, opinions, and information about library-related subjects and issues. These forums are intended to create welcoming and inviting online spaces where library users can interact with library staff and other library users while finding useful and entertaining information related to the library's activities and resources. Library staff who participate in the Library's social media platforms should always keep in mind that, when responding to comments or posting on behalf of the Library, they are speaking for the library, not for themselves.

The Merrimack Public Library regards online social media platforms in the same way as its other information resources in accordance with its mission of serving the informational, educational, and leisure needs of Merrimack residents.

Definition of online social media services

Online social media services and platforms is defined as any website or application that allows users to digitally share information. The Library's social media forums are *limited public forums* – defined as “a public forum created by the government voluntarily for expressive activity that may be restricted as to subject matter or class of speaker.”

Parental Controls and Privacy

As with more traditional resources and the Internet, the Library does not act in place of, or in the absence of, a parent/guardian and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent/guardian may place on a minor's use of social software applications.

The Library does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third-party site in any way other than to communicate library-related information to users on that site, unless permission has been granted by users for Library contact outside of that specific site. Users may remove themselves at any time from the Library's friends, fans, or followers lists, or request that the Library remove them. Users should be aware that third-party websites have their own privacy policies and that it is the responsibility of the user to familiarize themselves with such policies.

Users are encouraged to protect their privacy by not posting personally identifying information, such as last name, school, age, phone number, or address.

Commenting

Comments, posts, submissions, and messages are welcome on the Library's social media sites. While the Library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored

for content and relevancy (before publishing when possible). The Library reserves the right to report, mute, block, flag, or engage in a similar action, or to remove messages or postings that it deems to be abusive, defamatory, or otherwise inappropriate for the service, and to mute or block accounts making such comments and posts. All posts which contain any of the following will be removed:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Content that violates any applicable laws or regulations
- Plagiarized or copy-written material
- Private personal information published without consent of the individual to whom that information pertains
- Comments, photos, or images unrelated to the library, its mission, or its activities
- Hyperlinks to materials that are not directly related to the discussion topic
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Contains viruses or programs that may damage the operation of another's computer
- Organized political activity

Prior to the removal of inappropriate posts, the posts or comments will be saved as screenshots; physical threats will be reported to the Merrimack Police Department along with the screenshot and any information that is available, such as the author of the post or their username, when the threat was posted, and on what social media platform. The Library Director shall retain these records in case they are needed for evidence in the future.

All comments are in the public domain. By posting content, the user agrees to indemnify the Merrimack Public Library and its elected officials and employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs (including attorney's fees) incurred by any of them which arise out of or are related to the posted content.

Liability and Participation

The Merrimack Public Library assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any Library-sponsored social media service, and does not endorse content outside of the pages maintained by the Library and the posts created by Library staff. Participation in the Merrimack Public Library's social media services implies agreement with all Library policies, including its Rules & Regulations, Internet Policy, and the Terms of Service for each individual third-party service.

Ongoing Use Evaluation

The role and utility of social media services in relation to the goals and purposes of the Library will be evaluated periodically by the Library's staff and Board of Trustees, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.