

BAY COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

PERSONAL BEHAVIOR ON SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

It is important that all Library employees understand the implications of engaging in forms of social media and online conversations that reference the library and/or the employee's relationship with the library and its products and services.

There is a fundamental difference between speaking "on behalf of the library" and speaking "about the library." The following expectations are *a guide to personal or unofficial online activities where staff may comment about the library*.

- (1) Ethics – All employees should conduct themselves in a manner that avoids favoritism, bias and the appearance of impropriety. Employees should not engage in conduct or activity that may raise questions as to their honesty or the library's impartiality, standards or reputation, or otherwise cause embarrassment to the library.
- (2) Judgment – Anything posted that can potentially tarnish the library's image is ultimately the responsibility of the employee. The employee's right to use social media is recognized by the library but the employee is expected to exercise sound judgment and common sense.
- (3) Scouting for Compliments & Criticism – Whether or not responsible for the library's formal social media presence, employees are vital assets for monitoring the social media landscape. Employees who come across positive or negative remarks about the library that are believed to be important are encouraged to forward them to the Marketing Manager and the Director.
- (4) Responding to Negative Posts – Employees who come across negative or disparaging posts about the library should avoid the temptation to react on their own. Instead they are encouraged to forward them along to the Marketing Manager and the Director.
- (5) Mixing Your Business & Personal Lives – Online, personal and business personas are likely to intersect. Employees should remember that information posted online is widely accessible and easily forwarded. Posted content intended for friends and family may also be viewed by patrons, colleagues, supervisors and others.

It is the library's expectation that employees will never post:

- a. Non-public library information (including confidential and/or sensitive information)
- b. Discriminatory statements or sexual innuendos regarding coworkers, management, patrons or vendors

- c. Defamatory statements regarding the library, its employees, patrons, competitors or vendors

Engaging in any of these activities may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

- (6) Owning Your Own Comments – When posting, employees must include a disclaimer that clearly states that their comments are theirs alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Bay County Library System. Even with a disclaimer, employees should be aware that taking a public position online that is not in the library’s best interests might cause conflict.