

Town of Gainesville Public Library, Silver Springs, New York

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose

The Town of Gainesville Public Library (“the Library”) welcomes interaction on various social networking websites, platforms, and media. The Library invites comments, posts, and messages, while recognizing and respecting differences of opinion and upholding the Code of Conduct. The Library maintains this policy to guide individuals on the responsibilities of the Library and members of the community when interacting via the Library’s social media accounts.

Definition

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines social media as “forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)”.

Library social media platforms included in this policy are: the Library website; Facebook; Instagram; Tik Tok; and You Tube.

Target Audience

The target audience of the Library’s social media are members of the Gainesville and Silver Springs communities at large and patrons of the Library.

Confidentiality

Due to the terms and conditions of social media website, the Library cannot guarantee user privacy when interacting with the Library on social media. For that reason, individuals should use their own discretion when commenting or sharing on the Library’s social media pages.

Requests to Add Content to Library Website or Social Media Accounts

The Library’s website and social media accounts provide links to external websites and social media accounts to support the Library’s mission. Visitors to those sites and accounts are advised to check the privacy statements and be cautious about

providing personally identifiable information without a clear understanding of how the information will be used.

Non-Library parties may suggest links, but inclusion and placement of all external links will be at the sole discretion of the Director and/or this designee(s).

Usage Rules

When users choose to comment or share content on the library's social media platforms, they agree to do so with responsibility and respect for the Library's purpose and community. When commenting, users should:

- Always communicate with respect and be considerate of others.
- Act legally and ethically.
- Protect your privacy.

The Library reserves the right to remove content or comments containing any of the following from any Library social media forum:

- Obscene content or hate speech (any speech that degrades others on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation).
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language.
- Private or personal information, including phone numbers and addresses, or requests for personal information.
- Potentially libelous statements.
- Falsification of identity.
- Plagiarized material.
- Comments, links, or information unrelated to the purpose of the forum.
- Spam or other commercial, political, or religious messages unrelated to the Library or its social media postings.
- Solicitation of funds.
- Any images, links, or other content that falls into the above categories.

The Library reserves the right to ban or block users who have posted in violation of this policy.

In addition, users are expected to abide by the terms and conditions set by third party social media platforms as well as follow appropriate federal and state laws.

The Library requests that individual user complaints be addressed directly to the Director so they can be addressed quickly and specifically. Social media is not the mechanism used by the Library to collect or officially address complaints and concerns related to Library policy, procedures, or services.

The Library is not responsible or liable for any content posted by any participant on a library social media platform who is not a Library employee.

Acceptance of Terms

By following the Library on social media or using the Library's website, you signify that you agree to the Library's Code of Conduct.

Staff Responsibilities

Authorized staff members will maintain Library social media accounts as part of their assigned duties. No employee shall use the Library social media accounts for commercial promotions, spamming, or political activity. When using social media as part of their assigned duties, employees are expected to abide by all applicable Library policies, as well as state and federal laws about confidentiality of library records.

Staff Personal Social Media Use

Employees using social media for personal use may do so during breaks, meal periods, and before or after scheduled work hours. Employees should not use social media for personal use at the Library's service desk, or anywhere in full view of the public.

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) protects personal use of social media when employees are not at work. The following clauses do not restrict employees from participating in activities protected by the NLRA.

Employees who choose to identify themselves as Library employees on their personal social media accounts are expected to, as best as possible, make it clear that their posted content does not reflect the views of the Library.

Patron and coworker privacy is an important aspect of a public library. Employees should respect patron and coworker privacy, and refrain from posting identifiable information or comments regarding patrons or coworkers.

Library records are confidential and protected under New York State Civil Practice Law & Rules, § 4509. Employees should not post confidential information or non-public information on any social media accounts whether personal or Library-owned.

Using social media to harass, discriminate, bully, threaten, or defame a coworker or patron will not be tolerated.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: *November 14, 2022*