

Policy Statement

The Comstock Township Library (“The Library”) uses social media to increase awareness of and accessibility to its programs, resources, and services in order to serve its mission. The purpose of this policy is to address use of social media activities including but not limited to blogs, social networks, online communications, online catalogs, websites, and mobile applications by the Library and its employees, volunteers, elected officials, and patrons. The Library’s social media sites are not intended to be traditional public forums for the general exchange of ideas and viewpoints, but a limited public forum for discussing Library programs, events and materials. The Library does not make its social media accounts available for general public discourse, but rather reserves and limits the topics that may be discussed on social media accounts.

Regulations

Definitions

- “Library” shall mean Comstock Township Library
- “Posting” shall mean any writing, image, video, audio file, and hyperlinks to other websites [or media which is downloaded, referenced; or inserted] placed upon any library social media site.
- “Social media site” shall include any online web site, web application or web account created and/or maintained by the library, which permits users to communicate with other users through postings, including without limitation, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, chat rooms, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, and Instagram.

1. Library-Sponsored Social Media

- A. Only those employees responsible for the Library’s social media sites should be actively participating on those sites during work hours. Employees who contribute to the Library’s social media should present content in a professional manner and should check facts, cite sources, avoid copyright infringement, present balanced views, acknowledge and correct errors, and check grammar and spelling before posting.
- B. Employees should not discuss confidential, work-related matters through social media.
- C. Content that is posted on Library-sponsored social media sites is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and records retention requirements.

2. Posting on Social Media

- A. The Library permits patrons to comment on Library posts and patrons are invited to share opinions about Library-related subjects, resources and programs. Postings do not

indicate Library endorsement of the ideas, issues, or opinions expressed in posts on its social media sites.

- B. The purpose of the Library's social media sites is to inform Library users about educational opportunities, library programs, events (including those co-sponsored with other organizations) and materials, and to encourage dialogue and the exchange of information and knowledge between users and Library staff about these programs, events and materials.
- C. The Library reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed to be in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Content that is deemed not suitable for posting by the Library because it is not topically related to the particular subject being commented on, or is deemed prohibited based on the criteria defined below, shall be retained pursuant to the records retention schedule along with a description of the reason(s) the specific content was deleted. Content and comments on the Library's social media accounts containing any of the following forms of content and postings shall not be allowed:
 - i. Obscenity or child pornography
 - ii. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, age, gender, marital status, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, ancestry or any other protected category.
 - iii. Slanderous, libelous, threatening or defamatory statements.
 - iv. Copyrighted or trademarked material.
 - v. Spam.
 - vi. Content not related to Library business, programs, events, resources and materials.
 - vii. Advertising or sale of merchandise or services
 - viii. Charitable solicitations or political campaigning

3. Violations

- A. The Library, its employees, agents and officials assume no responsibility for any damages, direct or indirect, arising from participation in Library-sponsored social media. The Library is not responsible or liable for the content or postings by third parties on any Library sponsored social media site, and third party postings do not reflect the opinions of positions of the Comstock Township Library, its employees, or Board of Trustees.
- B. Postings that the Library Director or her designee deems to have violated this policy, may be removed in whole or in part by the Library Director or designee. The Library reserves the right to terminate accounts, ban or block users who have posted in violation of this policy on more than one occasion.

4. Patron Participation

- A. By joining, utilizing and/or posting on the Library's social media sites, you agree to comply with this Policy, and the Library's Policy on Internet and Computer Use, as applicable. The Library's Social Media Policy applies whether or not a patron chooses to post comments using a computer at the Library or when posting from any other computer to any Library social media site. While the Library encourages dialogue, it respectfully requests that commenters be mindful that its social media sites are open to the public and commenters be courteous and civil toward one another. By posting on the Library's social media sites, the user gives the Library permission to use their name, profile picture, and the content of any posting made without compensation or liability on the part of the library. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own policies and should proceed accordingly.
- B. Patrons are personally responsible for their commentary. Patrons should be aware that they may be held personally liable for commentary that is defamatory, obscene, proprietary or libelous by any offended party, not just the Library.

Approved: April 9, 2018
Comstock Township Library Board of Trustees