

Caroline County Library

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Policy Statement

Caroline County Library participates in various “social software” applications whereby library staff and community members can interact through virtual (internet) communication. The library regards online social software applications in the same way as its other information resources in accordance with its mission of serving the library’s patron needs for informational, educational, cultural and recreational pursuits. Much of the content will relate to libraries, books, and the book publishing industry; and to programs, events, images, or special topics that the library is sponsoring, holding, or promoting.

Social software is defined as any website or application that allows users to share information. Social software can include, but is not limited to, blogging, instant messaging, social networking sites, and wikis. Many social networking sites allow users of those sites to become a “friend”, “fan” or otherwise associate their own “profiles” or virtual presences with the library’s profile on these sites. Examples of such sites are Twitter, Facebook, Myspace, YouTube, and various blogging sites like Blogger and WordPress.

Policy Regulations

- As with more traditional resources, the library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor’s use of social networking sites.
- 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 with users on that site, unless granted permission by users for library contact outside the site. The purpose for contact outside the site may include program promotion, reference help, or other similar activities.
- Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on Caroline County Library social networking sites. Library staff reserves the right to review all comments and postings and delete comments that are inconsistent with the library’s policies or irrelevant to the content created by staff. Comments or postings that fall within one of the following categories will be deleted by the library staff.
 - Obscene, sexist, or racist content
 - Harassing library staff or other social media users- harassing comments or postings include profane or obscene statements or images, threatening physical harm toward another person, and engaging in behavior with the sole intent of annoying another person
 - Libelous and slanderous statements
 - Plagiarizing or posting copy-righted material without permission or authority
 - Private, personal information published without consent
 - Comments, postings, and/or hyperlinks not related to the content created by library staff

- Advertisements and spam
 - Organized political activity
 - Photos or other images that fall in any of the above categories
- The library reserves the right to edit or modify any postings or comments for space or content, while retaining the intent of the original post.
- The library shall be granted the right to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues. For example, a response to a YouTube book review may be quoted in a newspaper or on the library website. Identifying information, other than first name, will be removed unless prior approval is granted by the user.
- Caroline County Library assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any library-sponsored social networking service, and does not endorse or review content outside the "pages" created by library staff.
- Participation in Caroline County Library social networking services implies agreement with all library policies, including its *Social Networking Policy* and *Internet Acceptable Use Policy*, and the terms of service of each individual third-party service. If a user does not agree to these terms, they are not to use the services provided.
- The role and utility of social networking sites will be evaluated periodically by library staff, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.
- As per the state records retention policy, social networking records are defined as “Transitory Material” (of limited reference value, including general postings and comments, general correspondence, walls, feedback, and related records); or as “non-historic” and/or “duplicate” including press releases, photographs, public service announcements, notices of upcoming events or other related records. Thus such records are not required to be retained after administrative and/or reference value has been served. If the library staff deletes a comment or posting, the library will retain the deleted material for 30 days.

Adopted by Caroline Library, Inc. Board of Trustees February 10, 2011
Amended and Adopted by Caroline County Board of Supervisors January 14, 2020