



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose of Library's Social Media Sites

The Gates Public Library selects carefully-chosen social media tools in order to enhance communication with Gates Public Library employees and Library users. The primary purpose is to inform the general public about Library programs, events, materials, and to encourage dialogue and the exchange of information and knowledge.

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 forum for discussing Library programs, events, and materials. Courts have recognized that libraries are limited purpose public forums, and as such, are only obligated to permit the public to exercise rights that are consistent with the nature of the Library and consistent with the government's intent in designating the Library as a limited purpose public forum. All postings related to this mission statement (as so determined by the Library in its sole discretion) are permitted except as otherwise stated in this policy.

Gates Public Library recognizes that new tools will emerge which have useful applications in the Library setting; thus this policy addresses social media in general.

Agreement

By joining, utilizing, and/or posting on the Library's social media sites, patrons agree to comply with this policy, as well as the Internet Safety Policy, as applicable.

Definitions

"Library" shall mean the Gates Public Library and its Board of Trustees, and/or the Friends of the Gates Public Library and its Board of Trustees.

- "Employees" shall mean both paid employees and unpaid volunteers.
- "Posting" shall mean any writing, image, video, download, audio file, and hyperlinks to other websites placed upon any Library social media site.
- "Social media site" shall include any online forum/site, web application, or account created and/or maintained by the Library or its agents, which permits users to communicate with other users through postings, including without limitation, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, Pinterest, Goodreads, Discord, Zoom, Google Meet, and Eventbrite.

Disclaimer

The Library is not responsible or liable for the content of postings by third parties on any Library-sponsored social media site. Postings do not necessarily reflect the opinions or positions of the Gates

Public Library or the Friends of the Gates Public Library, its employees or volunteers, or its Board of Trustees.

No Privacy

Users of all ages have the responsibility to protect their privacy and should not post personally identifying information, such as last name, school, age, phone number, or address. The Library does not act in place of, or in the absence of, a parent. Patrons should have no expectation of privacy in posting on Library-sponsored social media sites. By utilizing these sites, patrons consent to the Library's right to access, monitor, and read any posting on these sites. The Library's social media sites may be considered public records under New York State Public Records laws. If requested, via a Freedom of Information Act request and/or court order, the Library must disclose public records to third party requestors unless certain exemptions apply. The Library in its sole discretion shall determine whether postings on its social media sites are public records and whether exemptions from disclosure apply.

Postings

Library social media offerings are intended to create a welcoming and inviting online space where Library users will find useful and entertaining information about educational opportunities, Library programs, events and materials. Accordingly, any postings inconsistent with this stated purpose, as determined by the Library in its sole discretion, may be removed in accordance with the process set forth in this policy. Examples of postings not permitted include, but are not limited to:

1. Personal advertisements;
2. Spam or other commercial, political, or proselytizing messages;
3. Postings which contain obscene and/or pornographic matter;
4. Disparaging, harassing, abusive, or profane postings;
5. Postings that are hateful, threatening, or that contain graphic or gratuitous violence;
6. Potentially libelous or defamatory postings;
7. Postings which contain privileged, proprietary, or confidential information about any person, business, or entity, including, without limitation, patrons, vendors, the Library or Library partners;
8. Postings which violate or potentially violate local, state, or federal laws, including, without limitation, intellectual property, and copyright laws;
9. Postings which violate or potentially violate Library policies;
10. Postings which discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, age, sexual orientation, creed, or ancestry;
11. Postings which are sexually harassing, including, without limitation, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, sexual rumors that show hostility toward individuals based on compliments, innuendos, suggestions, or jokes.

Violations of this Policy

Postings which the Library in its sole discretion deems unpermitted under this policy may be removed in whole or in part by the Library or its employees immediately upon discovery by the Library (or its employees) without prior notice. The Library reserves the right to terminate accounts and ban or block users who have posted in violation of this policy on one or more than one occasion. The Library reserves the right to close comments at a pre-determined time and not respond to the commentary received. Gates Public Library reserves the right to lawfully monitor employees' use of Library social media, including,

but not limited to, statements/comments posted on the internet, in blogs, and in other types of openly accessible forums.

Reporting Violations

Users may report violations of the Library's Social Media Policy by contacting the Library Director at Gates Public Library, 902 Elmgrove Road, Rochester, NY 14624 or via the Director's email as found on the Library's website, <https://www.gateslibrary.org/>.

Approved by Gates Public Library Board: 11/17/21