Social Networking Software Policy [PUB5]

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Revised Date:
SECTION: Public Service

Purpose

Social Software is defined as any web application, site or account created and maintained by Brantford Public Library (BPL) which facilitates an environment for library staff and library users to share opinions and information about library related subjects or issues. BPL recognizes and respects differences in opinion.

Policy

The Brantford Public Library regards online social software applications in the same way as its other information resources in accordance with its mission of serving Brantford's needs for information, lifelong learning, and leisure pursuits. As with more traditional resources, the Library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent. The Library is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of this resource.

In addition to the general rules respecting use of the library, the Brantford Public Library Board prohibits the use of its social softward applications for any purpose which would contravene any statute or government regulation, or which might create civil liability by the user or the Library Board to any person. For example, the Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits certain forms of discrimination and harassment of other individuals or groups, and the Criminal Code includes prohibitions against child pornography, obscenity, hate literature, and literature for illicit drug use. An example of civil liability is the law of libel and slander. No effort has been made to be exhaustive in giving the above examples. Users are reminded that ignorance of the law is not an excuse. Use of Library social software applications is conditional on the user's agreement to observe this policy. By continuing to use the application, the user indicates agreement to all requirements of this policy.

Comments, posts and messages are welcome on BPL social software sites, provided they do not contain:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam

All social software sites affiliated with the library will be regularly screened. All postings which contain any of the above will be immediately removed and the poster barred from posting any subsequent messages to library social software sites.

Any proposals by library staff to use social software applications to expand or promote the collections, services and programs of the Brantford Public Library are first vetted by the appropriate department Manager. The Manager then submits the proposal to the Chief Executive Officer of the Brantford Public Library for review and approval prior to implementation.

By posting content, the user agrees to indemnify BPL and its officers and employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages and costs (including attorney's fees) incurred by any of them which arise out of or are related to the posted content. Forums and messaging may not be used for commercial purposes or for organized political activity.

If any user does not agree to these terms, they are not to use the service, as violation of the terms can lead to legal liability.

Adapted from: Newton Free Library Blog Policy; Washoe County Library Social Software Policy