

# Knox Public Library

## Communications Policy

### **Purpose:**

Photos, videos, media relations, and social media are all tools that help tell the engaging and vibrant story of the Knox Public Library. The Communications Policy supports organizational strategies to raise awareness of services, communicate an inspiring vision, and the Library's story of impact.

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for and responsibilities regarding the means by which we communicate about the Knox Public Library in a consistent and compelling voice. These standards ensure that the Knox Public Library is using media tools and methods that are compliant with existing policies and legal requirements.

### **Media Relations:**

With the intention of providing effective, responsive, and consistent communications to our community through news outlets, the primary spokesperson for the Knox Public Library is the Library Director.

### **Photographs and Video or Audio Recordings:**

The Knox Public Library is permitted to take photographs and video or audio recordings of people of all ages at the library and library sponsored events for publicity. If a patron does not want to be photographed or recorded, they need to "opt out" by notifying library staff. Names of patrons will not be used in publicity without consent. Commercial photography or recordings of Library signage, activities, events, equipment, visitors, or staff are not allowed without advance permission.

### **Definition of Social and Electronic Media:**

Social and electronic media is defined as any web application, site, or account created and maintained by the Knox Public Library that supports the purpose statement as written above. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking applications (Facebook and Instagram), the official library website, electronic newsletters, and online collaborative spaces used for library programs (Zoom).

### **Staff Responsibilities:**

When using social and electronic media as a representative of the library, behavior and content reflects not only on that staff member, but on the library as a whole. When representing the library via social and electronic media, staff will:

- Conduct themselves as a representative of the library
- Refrain from using hate speech or other language that is profane, sexually explicit, abusive, or demeaning
- Refrain from making statements about patrons or otherwise posting, transmitting, or sharing confidential information
- Observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, or service mark restrictions on material published

### **Usage Rules:**

As the needs of the library and community change, we continue to adapt our use of electronic resources and social media. However, our online spaces are to be considered an extension of the library, and as such require users to adhere to the Library Behavior Policy. By choosing to interact within the online spaces affiliated with the library, public users agree to abide by the Library Behavior Policy. The Library retains the discretion to remove any comments or other content that violates the Library Behavior Policy for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Profane or sexually explicit content
- Hate speech or other language or behavior that is threatening or abusive to others
- Discussion of unlawful activity
- Private or personal information, such as address and phone number, or the solicitation of said personal information
- Potentially libelous statements
- Falsification of identity
- Copyrighted, trademarked, or plagiarized material
- Comments, links, or information unrelated to the purpose of the space
- Duplicated posts by the same user
- Spam posts

Persons who repeatedly violate the Library Behavior Policy may be banned or barred from posting in the online library spaces. The library has no affiliation with or control over any advertisers or other materials posted by third party sites or software. The library does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party sites in any way, other than to communicate with users of those sites.

#### **Appeals Process:**

Persons who have had their posts deleted or their presence banned from any of the library's social or electronic media spaces may submit an appeal request to the Director. The appeal must include an explanation as to why their content does not violate this Media Policy. Upon receipt, the appeal will be reviewed by the Director and a response will be provided within 10 business days. The Director may confer with library staff, board members, and legal counsel before responding.

#### **Personal Accounts of Staff Members:**

The Library recognizes the right of staff members to use social and electronic media for personal use on their own time. However, staff members must comply with the following policies:

- Good judgement should be used when making public statements, even when making private statements, be aware that privacy on social and electronic media has the potential to be breached. These statements are a reflection on the Library.
- The Library may monitor publicly visible comments or discussions, and staff may be asked to modify content deemed to be inappropriate or in violation of this policy. Refusal to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- Specific behaviors on social and electronic media may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to:
  - Knowingly making false or misleading statements to harm the Library's reputation or that of its staff members
  - Disclosing confidential or legally privileged information related to any person, including photographic or drawn images
  - Making discriminatory or harassing comments

- Threatening or abusive comments

**Bulletin Board Signage:**

The Library's bulletin boards and display areas are designed and intended to directly aid and supplement the primary activities of the Library. All library activities will take precedence over non-library activities, publications, or displays. Exhibits in the library are seen by all who enter the building (both children and adults).

- Priority placement will be given to community organizations and clubs, educational institutions, volunteer opportunities, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. For-profit organizations may submit postings for approval, but notices must be consistent with the library's mission statement of meeting residents' informational, educational, and recreational needs.
- Cultural events, non-partisan political groups, fundraising events for non-profit organizations, educational opportunities (educational or instructional opportunities may be posted, regardless of whether they are of a for-profit or non-profit nature), or other services that are of a non-profit, non-self supporting nature.
- Personal ads and campaign literature may not be posted.
- Items may be rejected for lack of space.
- Items will be removed after two weeks, when they are no longer timely, or when space is required for more current items.
- Members of the public are not permitted to post notices. Only authorized library personnel may post notices on the library bulletin board. Any notice to be considered for posting must be submitted to the Library Director for approval.
- Notices posted without authorization will be removed.
- Notice size (physical dimensions) can be restricted, if deemed necessary to maximize available space.
- The Library does not necessarily advocate or endorse the viewpoints of organizations permitted to post notices on the bulletin board.
- The Library accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to any item accepted for posting. All posted items are discarded after they are removed.
- Failure to comply with these rules may result in denial of future posting privileges.

Adopted: 03/2022