

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Merrick Public Library utilizes social media to interact with the community, other libraries, and the general public. Social media allows the public to access some of the resources of the Merrick Public Library without mandating a visit to the physical library. The Merrick Public Library regards social media the same as its other information resources in accordance with its mission of serving patron needs for access to informational, educational, cultural, and recreational pursuits.

Social media is defined as forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos). Examples are Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Wordpress. Many social networking sites allow users to become a "friend," "fan" or otherwise associate their own accounts with the library on these sites. As with 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 this resource.

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, volunteer opportunities, or other similar activities. Users may remove themselves at any time from the library's "friends" or "fan" lists, or request that the library remove them. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies.

Comments, messages and posts are welcome on Merrick Public Library social networking sites. While the library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be monitored for content and relevance before publishing when possible. Postings which contain any of the following will be removed and the user barred from posting any subsequent messages to library social networking sites:

- Obscene or racist content
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized or copy-written material without proper consent or attribution
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Organized political activity
- Photos or other images that fall in any of the above categories

Additionally, the Merrick Public Library reserves the right to edit or modify any postings and/or comments for space or content, while retaining the intent of the original post. The library shall also be granted the right to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues.

For example, a response to a Facebook posting 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. The Merrick Public 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 Merrick Public Library social networking services implies agreement with all library policies, including its Social Media Policy, Internet and Wireless Use Policy, and the Terms of Service of each individual third-party service. If a user does not agree to these terms, they shall not use the services provided. The role and utility of social software and networking sites will be evaluated periodically by library staff, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.