

Somerset County Library System – Policy Manual

CHAPTER IV - OPERATION OF THE LIBRARY SYSTEM

K. Social Media and Internet Postings

- A. Introduction: SCLSNJ recognizes that our employees may use, review, and post to interactive websites and other Social Media on the Internet. In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. SCLSNJ has established this policy and these guidelines for appropriate use of Social Media, to assist employees in making responsible decisions about their use of Social Media
- B. Definition: For purposes of this policy, “Social Media” includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to the employee’s own or someone else’s blog or web log, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity web site and/or account (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn), photograph or video site (e.g., You Tube), photo messaging account (e.g., Snapchat), web bulletin board, or a chat room, as well as any other current or future form of online or other electronic communication, regardless of whether it is associated or affiliated with the library.
- C. Guidelines
- a. SCLSNJ is not interested in limiting employees’ personal free speech rights or their rights to discuss the terms and conditions of their employment with the library. However, employees should be mindful that using Social Media presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. Therefore:
 - i. The same principles and guidelines found in SCLSNJ’s other policies apply to employees’ online activities. Ultimately, each employee is individually responsible for what he/she posts online. Before creating or posting any online content, employees should consider the risks and rewards involved in such activities.
 - ii. In addition to the Guidelines in this Policy, employees also must ensure their postings are consistent with all Library policies, including but not limited to the Library’s policies on Non-Discrimination, Workplace Harassment, Confidentiality of Library Records, Internet Use, Open Public Records Act (OPRA), and other relevant policies.

- iii. SCLSNJ will not tolerate inappropriate postings, such as those which include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence, or similar inappropriate or unlawful communications or conduct.
- iv. Employees always should try to be fair and courteous to fellow employees, customers, and volunteers of SCLSNJ.
- v. If posting complaints or criticisms on Social Media, employees should avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparages customers, employees, or volunteers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying.
 - 1. Examples of such impermissible conduct include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, gender or gender identity, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, marital status, civil union status, military or veteran's status, alienage or citizenship status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other Protected Group Status.
- b. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit any employee from using Social Media to discuss wages, hours of work and working conditions at the library.
- c. Employees should be aware that the Internet archives and remembers nearly everything and that others can locate even deleted postings.
- d. Employees shall refrain from posting any information or rumors that they know or suspect to be false about SCLSNJ or any of its employees, commissioners, and/or volunteers.
- e. Employees shall refrain from posting anything about a customer on Social Media, the same as if said orally or written in a different form, which would violate the Confidentiality of Library Records policy and/or the law.
- f. Employees may not create a link from Library's website to their personal blog, website or other social networking site.
- g. Employees shall not represent themselves on social media as either a spokesperson for, or a representative of, SCLSNJ, unless that is part of their assigned job duties.
 - i. When creating personal content in which the library is a subject, employees must be clear and open about the fact that they are not speaking on behalf of SCLSNJ, and that their opinions do not represent those of SCLSNJ or any its employees, the Library Commission, or other volunteers.

- ii. When referencing the library in Social Media, it is best to include a disclaimer such as, “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Somerset County Library System, the Somerset County Library Commission or its employees.”
 - iii. Online postings made in the ordinary course of performing job duties do not require a disclaimer.
- h. Employees shall not use Social Media for personal use during work hours, or while using library equipment or Internet access, unless it is for a work-related function and part of their assigned job duties. Working hours for these purposes shall not include any breaks or other non-working time, whether on or off Library premises.
- i. Employees may not use a work-issued library email address when registering on any Social Media for personal use.
- j. Employees reporting, in good faith, a possible violation of this or any SCLSNJ policy, or who cooperate in an investigation, shall not be subject to any retaliation or negative employment action.

D. Enforcement:

- a. The SCLSNJ Director and all supervisors will be responsible for enforcing this policy.
- b. Any employee(s) who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Adopted 3/4/15

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L. Photographing or Recording in the Library

A. Introduction

- a. There are significant concerns about using recorded images of library patrons and staff for publicity and/or acknowledgements.
- b. However, the library is a public space, and activities which occur in and around the premises do not have all the restrictions one can expect in the privacy of one's home.

B. Staff Practices

- a. SCLSNJ employees or representatives may take or produce photographs, video/audio recordings, and/or television productions of patrons under the following guidelines:
 - i. Signs will be posed in all branches that indicate the Library may take photographs or video images for non-commercial purposes.
 - ii. Patrons may opt out of inclusion in photographs for themselves or their children and/or guardians.

C. Guidelines for Relatives and Friends

- a. A patron's relatives and friends or others may photograph, produce video/audio recordings or television productions of an individual who is performing or participating in an SCLSNJ sponsored activity, under the following guidelines:
 - i. The patron or, as the case may be, a parent of a minor patron or the patron's legal guardian consents;
 - ii. The photographing, filming or recording would not be disruptive of overall service to other patrons;
 - iii. The photographing, filming or recording is limited to the patron whose consent was obtained;
 - iv. SCLSNJ employees are free to refuse to participate in such photographing, filming or recording.

D. Guidelines for Media and other Third Parties

- a. In any instance when the media wishes to interview, photograph, film, or record a patron of SCLSNJ, the conditions stated in the Guidelines for Relatives and Friends must be met and a representative of the branch library or the public information officer must accompany the media for all photographing, filming, or recording. Obtaining a completed consent form becomes the responsibility of the photographer/media representative, who maintains all liability.

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