



<b>Policy Name</b>	Social Media Use Policy		
<b>Section &amp; Number</b>	Board - G-25	<b>Effective Date</b>	2021-04-15
<b>Motion Number</b>	2025-52	<b>Last Review</b>	2025-04-16
<b>Author</b>	Manager, Programming & Promotions	<b>Next Review</b>	2029
<b>Policy Maintenance</b>	Reviewed by Management		

## Policy Statement

The St. Catharines Public Library (SCPL) uses its social media channels to extend the Library's welcoming and supportive service environment online in a manner which is consistent with the Library's mission, vision and service values.

SCPL uses social media to facilitate a setting for library staff, library customers, community members, and partner organizations to share opinions and information about library-related subjects or issues. Engaging in promotion, outreach, and branding through social media effectively extends SCPL's reach into the community.

The Library considers online and social media channels to be the same as other communications and service delivery channels. The same standards, policies, and guidelines apply to online and social media as all other forms of Library communication, and the same quality of service will be provided.

## Scope

SCPL's Social Media Use Policy applies to the Library's online and social media use on all SCPL owned social media accounts and official platforms, including, but not limited to, blogs, social networks and online communities, websites and mobile applications.

This policy applies to all Library staff and members of the public engaging with Library-owned social media channels.

## Definitions

**Social Media:** Digital technologies, platforms and online communities that allow publishing, communication and collaboration among individuals and organizations. Social media can take many forms, including text, images, audio, video and other multimedia communications.

**Social media content:** Includes original posts or shared content (photos, GIFs, videos, web links and text).

## Regulations

SCPL's Social Media Use Policy is in alignment with all applicable laws and by-laws, including but not limited to:

- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Criminal Code of Canada
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Copyright Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

The St. Catharines Public Library board endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries and the Ontario Public Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual.

## Operational Guidelines

The Library supports the responsible and effective use of online and social media for Library purposes, including:

- Engaging in promotion, outreach, awareness raising and branding
- Improving and supporting customer service excellence
- Delivering information about library services, trends and technologies
- Maintaining the highest levels of accuracy in the information communicated
- Respecting the privacy and anonymity of those with whom we communicate
- Respecting freedom of speech and difference of opinion while protecting Library employees and customers from offensive, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate speech
- Providing accessible and inclusive services

Through their presence in SCPL's online communities, Library employees facilitate communication, provide information services, and offer customer service.

SCPL takes no position on an employee's decision to participate in the use of social media networks on a personal level. Employees who do participate in social media may include information about their work at SCPL as part of their personal profile so long as such information and posting comply with the provisions of the SCPL Social Media Use Policy. When using social media for personal use and when identifiable as a Library employee, staff must be aware of their role in the organization and the potential impact of their communications on the brand, reputation and service values of the St. Catharines Public Library and act appropriately and with good judgment.

Social media content created by an employee as part of their employment responsibilities is the property of the Library and not the employee.

The Library does not accept any responsibility for any content that appears on its online and social media channels that does not originate from St. Catharines Public Library employees.

The St. Catharines Public Library prohibits the use of its social media for any purpose which would contravene any legislation or government regulation, or which might create civil liability by the customer or the Library Board to any person. Engagement with SCPL's social media is conditional on the customer's agreement to observe this policy. By continuing to use the application, the customer indicates agreement to all requirements of this policy.

The St. Catharines Public Library encourages all members of the public to contribute to SCPL's online and social media channels and communities. Comments, posts, messages and creative content are welcome on the Library's social media channels, providing they are in keeping with the Library's policies. While the Library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored and reviewed for content and relevancy. Posted content should not contain:

- Obscene content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially defamatory or discriminatory 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

The Library will remove any comment, post, or message that it deems in violation of this Policy and the poster may be barred from posting any subsequent content to the Library's social media channels.

Customer-generated content, including stories, videos, and artwork, is welcome on all online and social media channels affiliated with the Library unless inconsistent with the format of the particular channel, inconsistent with the Operational Guidelines for social media or otherwise specifically indicated on the channel. The Library may solicit specific types of customer content to showcase online, and the Library may determine, in its sole and unfettered discretion, which of such content will be showcased.

Being followed by the Library on any social media platform or content posted by other parties on Library social media channels does not imply the Library's endorsement.

The Library reserves the right to terminate its social media accounts.

## Reference

- Policy G-07 Code of Conduct
- Policy G-31 Privacy and Confidentiality of Customer Information
- Policy P-01 Workplace Violence and Harassment