

SH 620 Staff Use of Library Property & Services

SH 620.4 Guidelines of Employees' Use of Public Internet Communication

Adopted 1/11

Purpose

In an effort to promote a broader understanding of the Library's collections and resources, designated Library employees may engage, while at work, in public Internet communication. The following guidelines govern all public Internet communication (work-related or personal).

These guidelines will be reviewed and modified from time to time; employees who engage in public Internet communication are asked to refer to it on a regular basis to make sure that they are complying with the terms of the current version of this directive and all other library policies and procedures.

Definitions

Account, library – used in this document to include a website, server, page and/or profile that is administered, created and maintained by the Library.

Account, personal – used in this document to include a website, server, page and/or profile that is administered and maintained by an individual.

Administrator(s) – employees who, by virtue of position or appointment, oversee the administrative duties and content of the Library's public Internet communication. Their duties include creating and maintaining accounts & content and are authorized as spokespersons for their areas of expertise while at work. Current Administrator positions include: Director of Marketing & Communication, Manager of Web Development & Support. (Serves as consultant for library related groups (Friends, Endowment, Staff Association, etc)).

Library business – work that has the approval of one's supervisor

Participation – for the purposes of this document means the employee is involved in using public Internet communications by researching, reading, corresponding and/or posting.

Public Internet Communication - includes blogs, wikis, discussion forums, and other social media sites (examples such as facebook or twitter)

Representative – with supervisor permission, an employee may use his/her personal account on library time to join groups, read, post, or make comments relevant to library business. All such activities must advance Library purposes and further the Library's mission.

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Guidelines

1. Business Use

- a. Administrators and Representatives who participate in public Internet communication at work are trusted to do so as part of their professional identity as staff of the Library. As in the case of face-to-face interactions with members of the public, they will be asked to demonstrate good judgment and to conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner. In cases where challenging situations present themselves, seek the advice of supervisors with respect to an appropriate written response.
- b. Administrators and Representatives may not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, disparaging, abusive, hateful or embarrassing to another person or any other person or entity. This includes, but is not limited to, comments regarding the Library, its employees, partners and customers. Personal attacks while engaging in social media are not allowed. (see also SH 510 Discrimination & Harassment)
- c. Administrators and Representatives have a duty to protect the confidential information of other employees and Library customers at all times. (see also VF 310 Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records)
- d. Administrators and Representatives are expected to post meaningful, respectful comments; no spam or remarks that are off-topic or offensive.
- e. Representatives are to make sure that participation in public Internet Communication does not interfere with their other professional duties. If doing so interferes with any work duties and/or responsibilities, the Library reserves the right to disallow such participation. In addition, each Representative is expected to periodically discuss his/her social media activities with his/her supervisor so that the supervisor is aware of the amount of time being spent on such activities and the nature of the activities being undertaken. In the event that an employee's supervisor asks him/her to limit the amount of time being spent on public Internet communication or to stop undertaking such activity altogether, the employee must comply with such request immediately.
- f. While participating in public Internet communications to advance Library purposes, the Representative is expected to clearly identify

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him/herself as a Library employee, explain his/her position and role within the Library on any Representative profiles he/she creates for public interaction, and link back to MLS resources wherever possible.

- g. In general, Representatives participating in public Internet communication do so in order to educate the public about the Library's business and to answer questions related to their areas of professional expertise. If a member of the public raises an issue outside of the employee's areas of professional expertise, politely decline to engage in further discussion of the topic in question.
- h. Administrators and Representatives should always pause and think before posting. When a response is appropriate, reply to comments in a timely manner.

Overview of Administrator and Representative Actions

	Administrator	Representative
Create online Library account	✓	
Maintain online Library account	✓	
Create online personal account	✓	✓
Maintain online personal account	✓	✓
Post new content or thread	✓	✓
Post comment on existing thread	✓	✓
Post links	✓	✓
Upload images or video	✓	
"Like" or acknowledge posts	✓	✓
Delete posts and acknowledgments	✓	

2. Ownership of Public Internet Communication & Accounts

- a. Public Internet communication created at work and/or residing on Library maintained accounts is the property of the Library and may be edited or deleted by Library officials at any time and without notice.
- b. Out of respect for authorship, individuals are granted a non-exclusive license to reprint their work at their discretion.

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- c. In the unlikely event that the Library uses an employee's own public Internet communication (e.g., his/her personal blog), the Library will gain permission from the employee who authored the work.
3. Personal use
- a. Public Internet communication is permitted for Library business use only. However, limited, occasional or incidental use of public Internet communication for personal, non-business purposes is allowed (as is the case with personal phone calls and emails) provided it is:
 - i. in compliance with these guidelines and all other applicable policies and procedures of the Library; and
 - ii. reasonable in amount and does not interfere with work performance or Library business needs, and the work supervisor is in agreement with it. It should normally be limited to break and lunch times regardless of whether it is done from a computer, smart phone or other electronic device.
 - b. The Library reserves the right to monitor comments and/or discussions about the Library, its representatives, customers, vendors, and/or employees that are posted *anywhere* on the Internet, including in blogs, discussion forums and other types of openly accessible accounts.
 - c. Employees, regardless of whether they have indicated their affiliation with Metropolitan Library System on their personal public Internet communication site, may not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, disparaging, abusive, hateful or embarrassing to the Library, its employees, partners or customers. In other words, employees are responsible for their actions. Anything that an employee posts on his/her own public Internet communication site or others' that could potentially damage the MLS and/or its employees' image will ultimately be that employee's responsibility and may result in disciplinary action.
4. Library Equipment, facilities, servers, etc.
- a. The Library cautions that employees should have no expectation of privacy while using Library equipment and facilities for any purpose, including public Internet communication.

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- b. The Library has the right to create/maintain electronic archives of all electronic communications created with Library equipment.
- 5. Compliance
 - a. Employees may report violations of these guidelines to his/her direct supervisor or supervisor's supervisor. The Library will investigate and respond as appropriate.
 - b. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.