

Social Media Policy

Introduction and Policy Purpose

BPL's identity, image, and brand must be cohesive, intentional, and strategic. The BPL Staff is responsible for integrated communication to all constituencies and audiences, and therefore maintains authority over any communication administered on behalf of BPL.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure accuracy, consistency, integrity, and to protect the identity and image of BPL by providing a set of required standards for social media content from any department, entity, or affiliate.

All social media content under the jurisdiction of BPL (i.e., content on BPL servers or on servers funded by BPL budgets, or content that uses BPL's brand or likeness) must comply with local, state and federal laws and regulations, and BPL's policies, rules and regulations.

Official Accounts

The BPL Staff maintains official social media and/or online accounts on behalf of BPL. These accounts promote BPL activities, events, and educational opportunities by providing timely, engaging, and relevant content that assists in building broad-based support for BPL's mission, vision, and relationship with the public.

BPL may require employees to create official BPL social media accounts separate from their personal social media accounts for use on behalf of BPL.

Only an employee or approved representative authorized by the BPL Staff (collectively, the "page administrators") may hold administrative access to a BPL-related social media and/or online account.

The BPL Staff is responsible for maintaining a current list of all site URLs, the names of all page administrators, and the usernames and passwords associated with these accounts.

Limited Public Forum

Users and visitors to BPL's social media and/or online sites shall be notified that the intended purposes of the site are to serve as a mechanism of communication between BPL's page administrators and members of the public. Submission of comments by members of the public constitutes participation in a limited public forum. A comment posted by a member of the public on any BPL social media and/or online site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of the comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, BPL, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of BPL. Comments by BPL page administrators on BPL social media and/or online sites shall be allowed only when consistent with the provisions of this policy. Comments by the general public shall be allowed on limited public forums,

such as BPL social media and/or online sites, only when consistent with the provisions of this policy. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on any type of BPL social media and/or online site and are subject to editing, removal or restriction, in whole or in part, by BPL page administrators:

- Comments not topically related to the particular social medium thread or topic or article being commented upon (for example, if a BPL page administrator posts an article about library classes, and a user posts a negative comment about a BPL employee);
- Comments in support of or in opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures of any kind, with the exception of information approved in advance of BPL Library Director regarding political campaigns or ballot measures the BPL posts about on BPL social media and/or online sites;
- Profane, obscene, or sexual language or content or links to such language or content;
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, veteran status, genetic information, citizenship status, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression;
- Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to, advertising of any business or product for sale;
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- Defamatory or personal attacks;
- Threats to any person or organization;
- Conduct or encouragement of activity that violates any federal, state, or local law; or
- Conduct that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

If illegal activity occurs, page administrators are expected to secure the information and notify the local police department.

BPL reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law or regulation. Content submitted for posting that is deemed not suitable for posting by BPL page administrators because it is not topically related to the particular subject being commented upon, or is otherwise deemed prohibited content based on the criteria set forth in this policy, must be retained in accordance with the relevant records retention schedule.

This policy governing comments on BPL sites shall be displayed on all limited public forums or made available via hyperlink from BPL's official website.

Content Management

Page administrators representing BPL on BPL social media and/or blog sites must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of BPL in accordance with all BPL policies, standards, and regulations. Page administrators are personally responsible, and may be legally liable, for the content they publish on social media and/or online sites.

Advertising, Marketing, and Public Relations

BPL makes it a priority to comply with Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. § 45. Section 5 of the FTC Act reflects the four basic truth-in-advertising principles.

Public Records

BPL social media and/or online sites are subject to Idaho Public Records Law. Any content maintained in a social media and/or online format that is related to BPL's business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record. Therefore, there should be no expectation of privacy in the information posted on BPL social media and/or online sites. BPL is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media and/or online sites. Content related to BPL business shall be maintained in an accessible format so that it can be produced in response to a request. Whenever possible, such sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the relevant departmental public disclosure officer. Idaho law and relevant BPL records retention schedules apply to social media and/or online formats and content.

Open Meetings

BPL's governing body should refrain from using BPL or other social media and/or blog sites to discuss BPL's business or make a decision in violation of Idaho's Open Meeting Law.

BPL may use social media and/or blog sites to gather public input and foster public discussion related to BPL's role and functions, provided that the use is authorized in accordance with and conforms to this policy.

Information that BPL posts on its social media and/or blog sites will supplement, not replace, required notices and standard methods of providing warnings, postings, and notifications required for public meetings and hearings under Idaho law.