



BLOUNT COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
Bound Together

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Digital Platforms Policy

Purpose of BCPL Digital Platforms

The Blount County Public Library (BCPL) uses various social media and digital platforms with the purpose to provide the public with a 'digital library space' for sharing ideas, opinions, and information about library-related subjects and community information. The tone and intention used in these spaces is welcoming, and encourages users to interact with library resources, services, staff and each other. The BCPL regards the use of digital platforms as an integral part of its public relations strategies and is used in accordance with its mission of empowering residents to think, act, and aspire by providing opportunities to connect to our community, participate in life-long learning, and explore the world at large.

Definitions

Digital Platform is broadly defined as any website, or application through which the BCPL employees share information with users. The BCPL's digital platforms include, but are not limited to, its website, official social media accounts, the Bookmark Your Calendar e-newsletter, the BCPL Niche Academy, the outdoor street sign, and digital signage.

Social Media is broadly defined here as any website, application, or account that enables users to obtain or share information with each other or BCPL staff. Social media includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and review forums such as Google and Bing.

Management of BCPL Digital Platforms

BCPL has a Public Relations (PR) Team who manage all digital platforms and are the staff members listed below, numbers 1-5. Input, content creation, and community responses are made by approved BCPL staff. Approved staff members are:

1. BCPL Director
2. Deputy Director

3. Executive Administrative Assistant
4. Public Relations Coordinator
5. Online Services Coordinator

The Approved Department Staff Representatives have access to social media platforms.

6. Youth Services Representative
7. Adult Services Representative

Their roles are as follows:

1. The Public Relations Coordinator, under direction and supervision of Administration, is the lead for all social media platforms.
2. The Online Services Coordinator, under the direction and supervision of Administration, is the lead for the website, digital signage, outdoor sign, and e-newsletter.
3. All approved staff listed above have access to publish posts on BCPL social media sites. Information may be sent to the Public Relations Coordinator for publishing, or may be individually published with prior notice given to the Public Relations Coordinator.
4. All approved staff have access to reply to comments and messages on social media sites.
5. All content is subject to being edited or deleted by the PR Team.
6. Negative comments or messages will be handled as per the Social Media Communications Crisis Plan.

Brand Guidelines

When posting material and comments on any digital platforms, approved staff will:

1. Conduct themselves in a professional manner representing the BCPL
2. Share information about the BCPL, it's events, programs, services, and resources in a positive and exciting manner
3. Be informative, respectful, and helpful to all
4. Promote the BCPL, it's partners in programming, services, and resources, and community information from Blount County government, the City of Maryville, and the City of Alcoa
5. Cite original sources used if borrowed from external sources.
6. When possible, direct posts back to the BCPL website.
7. Respond between the hours of 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday

All approved staff will follow the Social Media Communications Crisis Plan when dealing with any and all negative, offensive, argumentative, and/or inappropriate digital interactions.

Public Use

The BCPL welcomes and encourages its users to interact on its social media accounts. Interacting on these accounts implies agreement with all BCPL policies, including its Digital Platforms and Internet Safety Policies, and the Terms of Services of each third-party vendor.

The BCPL does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party site in any way other than to communicate library-related information with users on that site, unless granted permission by users to be contacted outside of that specific site.

Users may remove themselves at any time from the Library's friends, fans, subscribers, or followers lists, or request to be removed to BCPL Staff. Users should be aware that the third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

Posts and Comments

Comments, posts, submissions, and messages are welcome on BCPL's social media accounts. While the Library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored for content and relevance (before publishing when possible).

All content which contains any of the following will be removed:

- Offensive, profane, or obscene content and/or language
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language that incites illegal activity or violence
- Potentially libelous statements
- Promotion of discrimination of any kind, including but not limited to, on the basis of race, age, religion, sexual orientation, ability and/or gender
- Plagiarized or copy-written material
- Private personal information published without consent of individual
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Organized political or religious activity or proselytizing

Content which contains any of the following may be subject to removal:

- Comments, photos, or other images unrelated to the BCPL library, its mission, or its activities
- Hyperlinks to materials that are not directly related to the discussion topic
- Content deemed to be off-topic or disruptive to the purposes of the site, its followers, and its sense of community and acceptance
- Content created by fake, impersonated, or anonymous users
- Content with an agenda that opposes the mission or values of BCPL

Liabilities and Participation

Users' posts on the BCPL social media accounts do not reflect views of the BCPL.

The BCPL assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any Library-sponsored social media accounts, and does not endorse content outside of the pages maintained by the Library and the posts created by the BCPL.

The BCPL does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent or guardian and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of social media.

Complaints

All complaints are shared and reviewed with the BCPL Director for resolution. How employees handle complaints on digital platforms is covered in the Communication Crisis Plan.

Block standards

BCPL maintains the right to block individual users on a social media account if:

- The individual user posts inappropriate, lewd, or obscene comments
- The user continuously promotes:
 - A brand, trademark, or company without prior approval from the BCPL
 - A personal agenda
 - A personal agenda that opposes the mission or values of the BCPL
- The user continuously posts comments that openly criticize or attack the BCPL placing it in a negative light.

To ensure social media account users are aware of the BCPL Block Standards, the following statement will be posted to each social media account.

"In accordance with the BCPL's Digital Platforms Policy, users who continuously post content that violates or disregards the policies will be blocked." The BCPL Digital Platforms Policy can be found at www.blountlibrary.org.

When a user is blocked, an email will be sent notifying the PR Team.

Outside Organizations

When the BCPL partners with an outside organization, these endeavors will be promoted

through our digital platforms. This includes:

- Promotion of events/programs being hosted at BCPL
- Promotion of events/programs that BCPL are a part of but are off the BCPL campus

If the partner is handling the public relations elements the following will be included:

- BCPL Branding Guideline for logo is followed
- BCPL PR has reviewed and approved the promotion to ensure it adheres to the BCPL Digital Platforms Policy

Organizations who have booked library spaces to hold an event/program must include in all their promotions the following:

- Location: Blount County Public Library, 508 N. Cusick Street, Maryville, TN 37804
- Adherence to overall BCPL Digital Platforms Policy

Employee Use

To maintain clear and consistent messaging, the PR Team and other approved department representatives are able to represent the BCPL on its social media accounts and other digital platforms.

No employee is allowed to create or delete BCPL accounts on social media or digital platforms without expressed approval from the BCPL Director.

Employees of the BCPL may have good reason, from time to time, to access social media outlets for work related functions. These occasions are acceptable as long as the usage is in fact work-related. Do not engage in non-library-related online (including social media) activities except during non-working hours.

This policy works in conjunction with the Blount County Employee Handbook, specifically the Social Media section. Where they vary, the BCPL policy should be followed. If the BCPL policy doesn't cover an element, the Blount County Employee Handbook will provide direction. If ever in doubt, contact the BCPL Director prior to taking any action.

Personal Use of Social Media

These practices apply to the use of social media on the employee's personal time.

1. Employees utilizing social media may identify themselves as employees of BCPL, but cannot use the BCPL name and logos for reasons other than sharing BCPL posts.

2. Employees may not respond to any comments made by the public to BCPL social media posts through their personal accounts
3. Employees may share BCPL posts as a means to positively promote the BCPL
4. Employees are prohibited from making official public comments on personal social media accounts referencing a library incident, policy, or employees and sharing confidential information
5. Employees are prohibited from posting any patron information on personal social media accounts.

Employer Monitoring

1. BCPL reserves the right to lawfully monitor employee's use of social media, including without limitation, to statements/comments posted on the internet, in blogs, and other types of openly accessible digital platforms.
2. Occasional and incidental use of BCPL systems for online activities during non-working time is permitted. Employees should not have expectations of privacy while using company equipment and facilities for the use of social media. BCPL reserves the right to monitor, review, and block content that violates these rules and guidelines.

Ongoing Use Evaluation

The role and utility of social media accounts in relation to the goals and purposes of the BCPL will be evaluated periodically by the Library's staff and Board of Trustees, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.