

Butler Area Public Library  
218 N. McKean St.  
Butler PA 16001  
[www.butlerlibrary.info](http://www.butlerlibrary.info)

## **Social and Electronic Media Policy - Approved December 2, 2020**

**Purpose Statement:** The Butler Area Public Library uses social media tools and other forms of an online presence (such as electronic newsletters, online meeting platforms, websites, and blogs) as a way to collaborate and communicate. These online interactions allow staff, board members, patrons and library users, and the general public to exchange information and ideas. Our online presence is intended to be a welcoming, inclusive, and safe space that allows for the free exchange of ideas and information; the promotion of literacy and library services and programs; general announcements related to the library; and online resources available to the public.

**Definition of Social and Electronic Media:** Social and electronic media is defined as any web application, site, or account created and maintained by the Butler Area Public Library that supports the purpose statement as written above. This includes, but is not limited to: social networking applications, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; any current or future blog spaces created by the library; the official library website; electronic newsletters; and online collaborative spaces used for library programs, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and Discord.

**Staff Responsibilities:** When using social and electronic media as a representative of the library, behavior and content reflects not only on that staff member, but on the library as a whole. When representing the library via social and electronic media, staff will:

- Conduct themselves as a representative of the library
- Refrain from using hate speech or other language that is profane, sexually explicit, abusive, or demeaning
- Refrain from making statements about patrons or otherwise posting, transmitting, or sharing confidential information
- Refrain from conducting personal business
- Observe and abide by all copyright, trademark, or service mark restrictions on material published

**Usage Rules:** As the needs of the library and the community change, we continue to adapt our use of electronic resources and social media. However, our online spaces are to be considered an extension of the library, and as such require users to adhere to the patron Code of Conduct. By choosing to interact within the online spaces affiliated with the library, public users agree to abide by the patron Code of Conduct. The library retains the discretion to remove any comments or other content that violates the Code of Conduct for reasons including but not limited to:

- Profane or sexually explicit content
- Hate speech or other language or behavior that is threatening or abusive to others
- Discussion of unlawful activity
- Private or personal information, such as address and phone number, or the solicitation of said personal information
- Potentially libelous statements
- Falsification of identity
- Copyrighted, trademarked, or plagiarized material
- Comments, links, or information unrelated to the purpose of the space
- Duplicated posts by the same user
- Spam posts

Persons who repeatedly violate the Code of Conduct may be banned or barred from posting in the online library spaces. The library has no affiliation with or control over any advertisers or other materials posted by third party sites or software. The library does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party sites in any way, other than to communicate with users of those sites.

**Appeals process:** Persons who have had their posts deleted or their presence banned from any of the library's social or electronic media spaces may submit an appeal request to the library director, via email or letter; the appeal must include an explanation as to why their content does not violate this Social and Electronic Media Policy. Upon receipt, the appeal will be reviewed by the library director, and a response will be provided within 10 working days. The director may confer with library staff, board members, and legal counsel before responding.

**Personal accounts of staff members:** The library recognizes the right of staff members to use social and electronic media for personal use on their own time. However, staff members must comply with the following policies:

- Good judgement should be used when making public statements; even when making private statements, be aware that privacy on social and electronic media has the potential to be breached. These statements are a reflection on the library.
- The library may monitor publicly visible comments or discussions, and staff may be asked to modify content deemed to be inappropriate or in violation of this policy. Refusal to do so may result in disciplinary action.
- Specific behaviors on social and electronic media may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to:
  - Knowingly making false or misleading statements to harm the library's reputation or that of its staff members
  - Disclosing confidential or legally privileged information related to any person, including photographic or drawn images
  - Making discriminatory or harassing comments
  - Threatening or abusive comments