

## **Social Networking Policy:**

The Billerica Public Library utilizes various online social networking services to provide public forums for sharing ideas, opinions, and information about library-related topics. These forums are intended to create a welcoming and inviting online environment where library users can interact with library staff and other library users while finding useful and entertaining information relating to the library's activities and resources. The Billerica Public Library regards our presence on social networking sites in the same way as all other information resources, in keeping with the Library's mission to "provide responsive library service to [our] residents through free access to diverse materials, programs and information".

Social networking services are defined as any website or application which allows users to share information. Social networking services can include, but are not limited to, blogging, instant messaging, social networking websites, wikis, and location applications. Many social networking sites allow users of those sites to associate their own virtual presences with the Library's profile on the same sites.

The library 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 for Library contact outside the site. At any time, users may disassociate themselves from any of the Library's online profiles or request that the Library dissolve our affiliation with their online profile. Users should be aware that third-party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly. Users are encouraged to protect their privacy by not posting personally identifying information. As with our other resources, the library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent and is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of these resources.

Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on the Billerica Public Library's social networking profiles. While the library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, all such interactions will be regularly monitored for content and relevancy, before publishing whenever possible. All posts which contain any of the following will be removed:

Obscene or racist content

Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language

Potentially libelous statements

Plagiarized or copyright-protected materials

Private personal information published without consent of the individual

Comments unrelated to the library, its mission, or its activities

Hyperlinks to materials that are not directly related to the discussion topic

Commercial promotions or spam

Organized political activity

Photos or other images that fall under any of the above categories

The Library is not responsible or liable for content posted by any user in any forum, message board, or other area within the social networking service. In addition, the Billerica Public Library reserves the right to edit or modify any postings or comments for space or content while retaining the intent of the original post. The Library shall also be granted the right to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues, including public relations and marketing materials. In those cases, the library will retain the user's first name only, removing any other personally-identifying information from the comment or post.

The Billerica Public Library assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any Library-sponsored social networking service, and does not endorse or review content outside of the profiles maintained by the Billerica Public Library staff.

The role and use of social networking services in relation to the goals and purposes of the Library will be evaluated periodically by the Library staff and the Board of Trustees, and may be terminated at any time without notice to users.

By posting a comment, you agree to indemnify the Billerica Public Library and its employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs (including attorney's fees) incurred by any of them which arise out of or are related to the content that you post. If a user does not agree to these terms, they are not to use our social networking services.

**Adapted from the Whitman (MA) and Hooksett (NH) Public Libraries**

**Original content by the Billerica (MA) Public Library**

**Adopted by the Board of Trustees April 11, 2011**