POLICY: ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

SECTION: II - General Policies - Miscellaneous

MOTION#/DATE: 13 - XXX – December 9, 2013

Effective Date

December 9, 2013

Policy Objective

This policy sets out how Toronto Public Library will use online and social media channels to address service objectives in a manner that is consistent with the Library's mission, vision and service values. The Online and Social Media Policy will:

- foster the effective and efficient use of online and social media to support excellence in customer service;
- outline expectations for members of the public, staff, and authorized external contributors for participation in online and social media channels;
- minimize risks by setting out guidelines for use and participation.

The policy sets out requirements and provides guidance to Toronto Public Library (TPL) employees, authorized external contributors, and members of the public who engage in the Library's online and social media channels by outlining requirements for content, roles, responsibilities, legal obligations for contributors and a risk management strategy for the Library.

Underlying Principle

Toronto Public Library will use online and social media channels to extend the Library's welcoming and supportive service environment online in a manner which is consistent with the Library's mission, vision and service values;

Policy Statement

Online communication and service delivery are essential to support Toronto Public Library's mission of providing access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas, in a welcoming and supportive environment. The effective use of social media reflects the Library's service values and commitment to excellent and responsive public service.

The Library considers online and social media channels to be the same as other communications and service delivery channels. The same standards, policies and guidelines apply to online and social media as all other forms of Library communication, and the same quality of service will be provided.

The Library supports the responsible and effective use of online and social media for Library purposes, including:

- engaging in promotion, outreach, awareness raising and branding;
- delivering information and other Library services;
- improving and supporting customer service excellence;
- supporting media and public relations activities;
- promoting accessibility for all.

The Library does not accept any responsibility for any content that appears on its online and social media channels that does not originate from Toronto Public Library employees or authorized external contributors.

To ensure that the Library leverages the potential of online and social media while managing the inherent risks, the Library will:

- post Terms of Use with requirements for participation and content, including:
  - the Library's right to alter, amend or remove content that does not comply with the Library's Terms of Use;
  - a Library contact for complaints and inquiries;
  - guidelines and expectations for all contributions on TPL's online and social media channels;
- guide members of the public to the appropriate communication or service channel and indicate expectations for service delivery and response;
- provide guidelines and/or training for all staff and authorized external contributors who contribute through the Library's online and social media channels;
- monitor and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of online and social media channels in meeting organizational objectives;
- develop risk management strategy to prevent and respond to potential issues and incidents in a timely, responsible and transparent manner.

Scope

Toronto Public Library's Online and Social Media Policy applies to the Library's online and social media activities, including but not limited to, blogs, social networks and online communities, websites and mobile applications.

This policy applies to all Library staff, authorized external contributors and members of the public who interact through the Library's online and social media channels.

This policy is meant to provide clarity and guidance on the unique considerations associated with online and social media channels, and works in collaboration with relevant legislation and TPL policies and procedures, such as the Rules of Conduct and the Employee Code of Ethics.

Roles and Responsibilities

TPL Staff
Through their presence in TPL's online communities, Library employees facilitate communication, provide information services, and offer customer service.

Toronto Public Library recognizes that employees are committed to high standards of ethical and professional communication, and expects this behavior to continue in the online environment. Social media is an extension of the Library's traditional channels and the Library service values therefore apply.

Postings, comments and all online content should reflect the mission and values of the Library, and adhere to the guidelines and best practices outlined by the Toronto Public Library.

An employee who becomes aware of an online incident or any content on a TPL channel that contravenes this policy or the Library's Terms of Use must report it to a supervisor in a timely fashion.

Social media content created by an employee as part of his or her employment responsibilities is the property of the Library and not the employee.

Staff are encouraged to promote TPL on personal social media accounts as appropriate. However, staff are not required to use personal social media accounts for work related purposes and activities.

When using social media for personal use and when identifiable as a Library employee, staff must be aware of their role in the organization and the potential impact of their communications on the brand, reputation and service values of Toronto Public Library and act appropriately and with good judgment.

When using social media platforms, other than those belonging to TPL, for work-related purposes, employees are expected to comply with the applicable terms and conditions of use.

In accordance with TPL's policies and procedures, the Library may take appropriate action in response to prohibited behaviour, up to, and including, dismissal and/or legal action.

Members of the Public
The Toronto Public Library encourages all members of the public to contribute to the vibrant, dynamic, and interactive spirit of TPL's online and social media channels and communities. Comments, posts, messages and creative content are welcome, providing they are in keeping with the Library's mission, vision, service values and policies. Contributions must comply with the Library's Terms of Use and not violate the Library's Rules of Conduct for user behavior.

User generated content, including user created stories, videos, graphic novels and artwork, is welcome on all online and social media channels affiliated with the Library unless inconsistent with the format of the particular channel, inconsistent with the Terms of Use or otherwise specifically indicated on the channel. The Library may solicit specific types of user content to showcase online, and the Library may determine, in its sole and unfettered discretion, which of such content will be showcased.

All content provided by users for inclusion on TPL's website or online and social media channels may be used and reproduced as the Library sees fit. By contributing content, users will agree through the Terms of Use that the Library has the right to use, reproduce and modify such content without making payments to the contributor. It is the responsibility of contributors to ensure that they have the right to contribute the material and they will bear full responsibility if they infringe the rights of anyone else in such material.

Authorized External Contributors
Authorized external contributors who are invited to participate in TPL's online and social media channels on behalf of the Library have an important role in maintaining a welcoming and supportive environment on the Library's online and social media channels, which can be done by adhering to the Library's Terms of Use and Library guidelines.

Library Content

All content contributed by, or on behalf of, the Library to its online and social media channels, remains the property of the Library. In order to reproduce this content, permission is required from the Library, except that the content may be reproduce in accordance with the Terms of Use.

Risk Management

Online and social media channels are dynamic and interactive with inherent opportunities and risks. Online messages are permanent, and have the potential to harm the image and brand of the Toronto Public Library. This policy, along with guidelines and training for staff, are intended to prevent incidents or problems that may occur when communicating online.

The Library will engage in best practices for managing online and social media channels, including:

- requiring approval for establishing channels;
- creating governance structures, guidelines and best practices to guide employees in the effective and appropriate use of channels;
- regularly monitoring channels to assess relevance and adherence to guidelines;
- designating appropriate staff resources to manage channels;
- training staff prior to use of TPL's official channels;
- creating, posting and enforcing the Library's Terms of Use;
- evaluating the success and sustainability of channels.

The Library will develop and maintain risk management protocols and procedures in the event of an online and social media incident. When an incident or issue occurs, the Library will provide an appropriate response in a timely manner.

In the event that an issue or an incident occurs, TPL will investigate the matter and take appropriate action, which may include one or more of the following:

- issuing a response, correction or apology;
- deleting a comment or post;
- investigating similar or related incidents to prevent repeat incidents;
- pursuing legal advice and/ or action;
- applying the Rules of Conduct to exclude patrons from use of Library facilities, depending on the seriousness of the incident;
- applying human resources procedures, including disciplinary action up to and including dismissal;
- reviewing incidents after the fact to determine if preventive measures or the Library's response could be improved.

Specific Directives

The Library will post Terms of Use on online and social media channels.

The Library's online service environment is available at all times. Although the Library does not actively monitor these channels at all times, they will be monitored regularly. Responses to concerns or complaints about the online service environment may not be provided immediately, but will be issued in a timely and appropriate fashion.

The Library will post appropriate response times on online and social media channels.

The Library does not restrict access to online communication for children and youth. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for monitoring and/or limiting the use of TPL's online and social media channels by their children.

On service channels targeted to children, the Library restricts the sharing of personal information that identifies individuals.

Accountability

The Director of Communications, Programming & Customer Engagement is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Definitions
Appendix 2: References

Appendix 1: Definitions

Authorized external contributor – Individuals not employed by the Library who are engaged by the Library to contribute to TPL's programs, services or events, including, but not limited to, writers-in-residence, authors, and entrepreneurs.

Online and Social Media – Online technologies and media that people use to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives. Online and social media can take many different forms, including internet forums, websites, mobile sites, applications (apps), web logs (blogs), social blogs, wikis, podcasts, pictures, video, rating and bookmarking. Technologies include: blogs, picture-sharing, email, instant messaging, music-sharing and, crowdsourcing, to name a few.

Personal Information - Recorded information about an identifiable individual. Personal information does not include the name, title, contact information or designation of an individual in a business, professional or official capacity.

User Generated Content – original content created by a user of Library online or social media channels, and uploaded to the Library's online and social media channels, including, but not limited to, stories, poems, videos, graphic novels and drawings.

Appendix 2: References

Legislation

Federal Legislation
Copyright Act (R.S., 1985, c. C-42) as amended.

Provincial Legislation
Ontario Human Rights Code (R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, s. 5 (1)) as amended.

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M. 56 as amended.

Related Policies
This policy overlaps with, and should therefore be considered in conjunction with, the following TPL policies and guidelines:

Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy
Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Policy
Communications Policy
Employee Code of Ethics
General Guidelines for Library Art Exhibits
Human Rights and Harassment Policy
Materials Selection Policy
Public Consultation Policy
Rules of Conduct