

# Centre Hastings Public Library (Madoc)

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Policy Type: **Operational**

Last Review/Revision: **Sept 2020**

Policy Title: **Social Media**

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## Purpose

This policy is meant to provide clarity and guidance to the unique considerations associated with online and social media channels.

Centre Hastings Public Library's online presence contributes to its official communications with the public through text, photos, video and audio files shared via tools such as social media networks and content sharing platforms. The library will continue to adapt and grow with the new technologies and platforms which are constantly emerging, and this policy will apply to all new online ventures.

## Principles

Centre Hastings Public Library will use social media channels to extend the Library's welcoming environment and provide a venue for communication between customers, partners and library staff in a manner that is consistent with the Library's mission, vision and service values.

### **We are committed to:**

- Responding to questions and concerns as quickly as possible
- Maintaining the highest levels of accuracy, objectivity, and impartiality in the information that we communicate
- Respecting the privacy and anonymity of those with whom we communicate
- Respecting freedom of speech and difference of opinion while protecting staff and users from offensive, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate speech
- Providing accessible and inclusive services

We expect the following from those who use our social media services:

- Show courtesy and respect to library staff and other users
- Adhere to all levels of government legislation including the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Refrain from behavior that is defined as "trolling" – i.e. intentionally antagonizing others online by posting inflammatory, irrelevant, or offensive comments or other disruptive content

# User Policy

In addition to the general rules respecting use of the library, the Centre Hastings Public Library prohibits the use of its social media for any purpose which would contravene any legislation or government regulation, or which might create civil liability by the user or the Library Board to any person. For example, the Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits certain forms of discrimination and harassment of other individuals or groups, and the Criminal Code of Canada includes prohibitions against child pornography, obscenity, hate literature, sedition and literature for illicit drug use. An example of civil liability is the law of libel and slander. No effort has been made to be exhaustive in giving the above examples. Users are reminded that ignorance of the law is not an excuse. Use of Centre Hastings Public Library social media is conditional on the user's agreement to observe this policy. By continuing to use the application, the user indicates agreement to all requirements of this policy.

Centre Hastings Public Library encourages members of the public to contribute to the dynamic and interactive spirit of the library's online and social media channels through comments, posts and messages, provided they do not contain:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized material
- False or misleading information
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam

All social media sites affiliated with the Library will be regularly screened by library employees. All postings which contain any of the above will be immediately removed and the poster barred from posting any subsequent messages to Library social media sites. If the post violates social media platform policies, it will be reported.

The Library assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any library-sponsored social media platform and does not endorse or review content outside the "pages" created by Centre Hastings Public Library.

By posting content, the user agrees to indemnify Centre Hastings Public Library and its officers and 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 posted content. Forums and messaging may not be used for commercial purposes or for organized political activity.

As with more traditional resources, the Library does not act in place of or in the absence of a parent. The Library is not responsible for enforcing any restrictions which a parent or guardian may place on a minor's use of this resource.

Centre Hastings Public Library will never use information shared through its social media for commercial purposes nor will it share this information with third-parties. Personal data will be saved only to ensure service delivery and only within the existing legal framework. We will share personal data with other institutions only as required by law.

If any user does not agree to these terms, they are not to use the service, as violation of the terms can lead to legal liability.

## **Staff Role and Responsibilities**

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. Approval is required before establishing new social media channels.

Staff must bear in mind that the same standards, policies and guidelines apply to online and social media as all forms of Library communications.

Staff members should seek guidance from the CEO if they are unsure if content is suitable for the library.

Staff is encouraged to promote Centre Hastings Public Library on personal social media accounts as appropriate. When using social media for personal use and when identifiable as Library staff, employees must be aware of guidelines for staff and the potential impact on the brand, reputation and values of Centre Hastings Public Library.

When using social media platforms other than those belonging to Centre Hastings Public Library for work-related purposes, employees are expected to comply with the applicable terms and conditions of use. Failure to adhere to this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

***Adapted from Greater Sudbury Library and Aurora Public Library Social Media Policies***