King County Law Library Social Networking Policy

Introduction

King County Law Library uses various "social networking applications" where Library staff and community members can interact online. The Library regards online social networking applications as another means of fulfilling its mission of aiding all persons with their legal information needs.

Definition

A "social networking application" is defined as any website or application that allows users to share information. Social networking applications can include, but are not limited to, blogging, instant messaging, social networking sites, and wikis.

General Policies for Staff

Employees of the Library are responsible for what they post. Employees are personally responsible for any online activity conducted with a Library email address, and/or which can be traced back to the Library's domain, and/or which uses Library assets. The Library's email address and/or name attached to a social networking application's profile imply that Library employees are acting on the Library's behalf. When using any Library social networking application, all actions are public and Library staff will be held fully responsible for their activities.

Library staff members will adhere to the policies set forth by the *Web Site Linking Selection Guidelines* and the *Staff Computer Use Policy* when using Library social networking applications.

Employee postings to the Library's social networking application must be restricted to Library business. Employees must use discretion in their postings. Postings can be seen by anyone and usually cannot be deleted. Postings must not contain profanity, obscenity, or copyright violations. Likewise, confidential or non-public information must not be shared. It is also not appropriate to engage in arguments with members of the public who post comments on the Library's social networking applications.

Employees should always consider whether it is appropriate to post an opinion, commit oneself or the Library to a course of action, or discuss areas outside of one's expertise. If there is any question or hesitation regarding the content of a potential comment or post, it is better not to post. There should be great care given to screening any communication made on behalf of the Library using social media applications.

Consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW chapter 42.30, social networking applications shall not be used to transact the official business of the Board of Trustees.

General Policies for Public

The Library does not collect, maintain or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third-party social networking application in any way other than to communicate with users on that site, unless granted permission by users for Library contact outside the site. The purpose for contact outside the third-party site may include program promotion, reference help, or other similar activities. Users may remove themselves at any time from Library social networking applications' "friends" or "fan" lists. The Library will honor all requests (where technically feasible) to remove users from Library social

networking applications. Users should be aware that third-party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly.

Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on Library social networking applications. While the Library recognizes and respects differences in opinion, the Library reserves the right to monitor and review content and relevancy.

The Library reserves the right to delete posts that are objectionable or offensive in nature, not relevant or off-topic, inaccurate, that contain copyright violations, and those that violate the terms of service of a social networking application. Users may be barred from posting any subsequent messages and/or be blocked or otherwise removed from a Library social media networking application.

By posting on Library social networking applications, the user grants the Library permission to reproduce comments, posts, and messages in other public venues. For example, a response to a Library YouTube book review may be quoted in a newspaper or on the Library's website.

The Library assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any Library-sponsored social networking application, and does not endorse or review content outside the "pages" created by the Library. Participation in social networking applications used by the Library implies agreement with applicable Library policies and the Terms of Service of each individual third-party service.

Records Retention

Communication through Library-related social networking applications is considered a public record and will be managed as such.

All comments or posts made to Library account walls or pages are public, not private. This means that both the posts of the employee administrator and any feedback by other employees or non-employees will become part of the public record. Because others might not be aware of the public records law, the Library will include the following statement (or some version of it) somewhere on the social networking application:

Representatives of King County Law Library communicate via this Web site. Consequently any communication via this site (whether by a Library employee or the general public) may be subject to monitoring and disclosure to third-parties.

In the spirit of transparency, if the Library receives messages through the private message service offered by the social networking application, the Library should encourage users to contact them at services@kcll.org. Private messages that Library receives should be treated as patron e-mails and therefore, as public records. The Library or staff member should reply using services@kcll.org.

The Library will assume responsibility for public records and adhere to the records retention schedule set by the Washington State Archives.

Adopted:
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