

MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# POLICY STATEMENT

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b><i>Social Media</i></b>
<b>DATE:</b>	November 13, 2012
<b>POLICY:</b>	<b>Social Media Policy (revised)</b>

The Mississippi Library Commission (MLC) supports the use of carefully chosen, consistently used social media tools as important enhancements to communication, collaboration and information exchange between MLC staff and the public. Online social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and LinkedIn can be valuable tools for communicating with the public and employees. MLC departments/bureaus are encouraged to study and utilize these new communication tools where appropriate.

Recognizing continuous technological advancement, this policy addresses social media as any facility for online publication and commentary, not in terms of specific programs, websites, or technology platforms.

This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media by employees of Mississippi Library Commission. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing/future agency policies.

All uses of social media are subject to the same legal and ethical standards that Library Commission employees must otherwise follow including state and federal statutes, the *Mississippi State Personnel Board Standards of Employee Conduct*, and the *Mississippi Library Commission Employee Guide*.

## Mississippi Library Commission Social Media Presence

Agency bureaus wishing to develop and use social media site(s) must have prior approval from MLC management before launch. Approval is required for any agency-sponsored site including those managed by an employee as part of their official duties.

1. Any proposed new social media presence or applications for the agency are discussed with the Executive Director.
2. MLC social media sites are clearly identified as official agency sites. Feed names incorporate agency's name when possible. (i.e. MLC Twitter account is @MSLibraryComm.)
3. Comments left on MLC social media sites remain regardless if favorable or unfavorable to the agency. Only comments with offensive language; or that are abusive, racially inflammatory, threatening, clearly off-topic; or endorse a political candidate, party, commercial product are deleted.
4. Agency social media sites are customer-focused, support existing commitments, and consistent with the mission of Library Commission.
5. All links are fully researched before posting. No defamatory, harassing, or indecent materials are posted or linked. All postings or links adhere to U.S. Copyright Laws.
6. Agency social media sites may follow political subdivisions or elected officials, but not political candidates. (i.e. Following "Secretary of State John Jones" is acceptable; following "Campaign to Re-elect John Jones" is not.)
7. Professional voice and standard English spelling/grammar are used; text-speak abbreviations are avoided.
8. Written permission from people in photos is obtained before photos/videos are posted. Written permission from a parent or guardian is required before photos/videos of children are posted.

*Adopted by Mississippi Library Commission Board of Commissioners on November 13, 2012.*

## Mississippi Library Commission Employees

*The agency does not interfere with free expression by employees done on personal time and on personal sites. However, any employee commenting on the agency or agency business on any social media site must clearly self-identify as an agency employee and include a disclaimer stating views expressed are their own and not those of agency.*

*MLC employees must recognize that social networks and online forums blur distinctions between an individual's official and personal identities.*

1. Employees must be sure that published personal thoughts and views, even in clearly personal venues, are not misconstrued as the position of the agency. An employee's MLC association must be considered in online social networks. If self-identified as an MLC employee, an employee must ensure their profile and related content (even if personal, not official) are consistent with agency's professional image and exemplify the public trust associated with the employee's position in the agency.
2. If an employee publishes content to any outside site about subjects associated with the agency, the following disclaimer must be included: *"Postings are my own and do not represent the opinion of the Mississippi Library Commission."*
3. Employees must be mindful of who may see an individual's profile or the associations that may be made. Online readers rarely distinguish between an individual's work life and personal life. Employees must always remember anything published on the internet has a life of its own and can live indefinitely.
4. Employees should always pause before posting. Information should not be published in haste or without thinking carefully about the impact or repercussions of postings.
5. Employees are not to use or reference their employment with the agency when writing in a non-official capacity. Official agency email is not to be used to establish a private social media presence.
6. If agency business (email, correspondence, etc.) is conducted over social media channels, use the same social media channel to respond, but forward the entire correspondence to agency email for records management purposes. (i.e. If a friend asks a work-related question on an employee's personal Facebook, the employee responds on Facebook, but forwards the exchange to their MLC email account.)
7. When using social media in an official capacity, employees do not address matters related to law, medicine, tax, or other areas more suited to subject specialists.
8. Employees have no right or expectation of privacy in any communication created, sent, or received either using MLC property or related in any way to the business of the Mississippi Library Commission.