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Approval Level:	CEO	Distribution:	All Employees
Review Schedule:	5 years (or as required)		

1.   PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Markham Public Library (the "Library", or "MPL") is committed to using social media to provide a venue for meaningful and engaging communication between community members, customers, partners and Library staff. The Library uses social media channels to extend its welcoming and supportive service environment online in a manner that is consistent with its mission, vision and service values.

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

2.   DEFINITIONS

Social Media – Online media and web applications that are used to share opinions, insights, experiences, and perspectives. This can include sites or accounts created and maintained by the Library which facilitate an environment for staff and Library users to engage, share opinions and information about Library-related subjects or community issues. MPL recognizes and respects differences in opinion.

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 crowd-sourcing, 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 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.

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

3.   POLICY STATEMENT

The Library regards social media in the same way as its other communication and service delivery channels. The same standards, policies and guidelines apply to online and social media as all other forms of Library communication. Library staff will strive to create a social media presence that is consistent with the Library's public service goals.

The Library uses social media for the following purposes:

- 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.

Social media provides a forum for promoting the free exchange of ideas, which the Library encourages. However, content that contravenes MPL's *Unacceptable Conduct Policy*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code, the Criminal Code of Canada, Copyright Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, or any other legislation, will be removed immediately.

MPL does not accept responsibility for any content appearing on its social media channels that does not originate from Library employees or authorized external contributors.

The Library reserves the right to edit or modify submissions when reposting or providing comment. Being followed by the Library on any social media platform or content posted by other parties on Library social media channels does not imply the Library's endorsement. Use of Library social media channels is conditional on the user's agreement to observe this Policy. By continuing to engage on the Library's social media, the user indicates agreement to all requirements of this Policy.

Comments, posts and messages are welcome on the Library's social media sites, provided they do not contain:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized material
- Private, personal information about an individual or staff member
- 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. 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.

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 social media.

The Library will not use information shared through its social media for commercial purposes nor will it share this information with third-parties unless required by law. By posting content, the user agrees to indemnify Markham Public Library and its officers and employees from and against all

liabilities, judgments, damages and costs (including legal fees) incurred by any of them which may 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.

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

All content contributed by, or on behalf of, the Library to its social media channels, remains the property of the Library.

4.0   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1   MPL Staff

Through their presence in MPL's online communities, Library employees facilitate communication, provide information services, and offer customer service. MPL recognizes that employees are committed to high standards of ethical and professional communication, and expects this behaviour to continue in the online environment.

Social media is an extension of the Library's traditional channels and its service values therefore apply. Postings, comments and all online content should reflect the Library's mission and adhere to the guidelines and best practices embraced by the Library.

An employee who becomes aware of an online incident or any content on an MPL channel that contravenes this or any other Library policy must report it to a Manager 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 MPL 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 the Library and act appropriately and with good judgment.

When using social media platforms, other than those belonging to MPL, for work-related purposes, employees are expected to comply with the applicable terms and conditions of use. Should prohibited behaviour occur, the Library may respond by taking appropriate action up to, and including, dismissal and/or legal action.

4.2   Members of the Public

MPL encourages all members of the public to contribute to the vibrant, dynamic, and interactive spirit of MPL's social media channels and communities. Comments, posts, messages and creative content are welcome, provided that they are in keeping with the Library's mission, vision, service values and policies. Contributions must comply with the Library's *Internet Access Policy* and the *Unacceptable Conduct Policy*.

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

All content provided by users for inclusion on MPL's website or social media channels may be used and reproduced as the Library sees fit. By contributing content, users agree 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.

4.3   Authorized External Contributors

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

5.0   RISK MANAGEMENT

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 Library. This Policy, along with guidelines and training for staff, is intended to prevent incidents or problems that may occur when communicating via social media.

The Library engages in best practices for managing 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 MPL's official channels;
- creating, posting and enforcing the Library's policies;
- evaluation of the success and sustainability of channels.

The Library has created risk management protocols and procedures in the event of an online and social media incident. Should an incident or issue occur, MPL will respond appropriately in a timely manner. This includes an investigation into the matter and appropriate action as deemed appropriate, 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 *Unacceptable Conduct Policy* in order to exclude customers 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.

5.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CEO / Directors shall:

- Ensure that they and their employees understand and comply with this Policy.

Managers / Supervisors shall:

- Ensure that they and their employees understand and comply with this Policy;

- Enforce this Policy.

Library Administration shall:

- Develop and distribute this Policy; and,

- Update this Policy per the Review Schedule.

Employees shall:

- Ensure compliance with this Policy and all related policies and legislation.

6.   RELATED LEGISLATION

- **Federal Legislation**:
    - *Copyright Act* (R.S.C., 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.

7.   RELATED MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICIES

- *Internet Access Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)

- *Customers First Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)

- *Unacceptable Conduct Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)

- *Child Safety Policy* (POL-Pub Serv)

- *Library Collections and Material Selection Policy* (POL-Admin)

- *Privacy and Access to Information Policy* (POL-Admin)

- *Respect in the Workplace Policy* (Harassment and Violence) (POL-HR)

- *Right to Disconnect Policy* (POL-HR)