

LOUTIT DISTRICT LIBRARY MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

Every employee, trustee, and volunteer of the library plays a vital role in representing the library to our patrons and our community. Therefore, it is critical for every employee, trustee and volunteer to perform his or her duties so as to encourage use of the library, enhance its excellence, and promote its public image.

The goals of the library's Media Relations Policy are to create and maintain a positive image for the library that is recognized throughout the community, to promote community awareness of the library's resources and services, to stimulate public interest in and use of the library, to develop public understanding and support of the library and its role in the community, and to inform the library's constituent municipalities of the library's contributions to our community.

Board of Trustees

Library trustees are responsible for communicating with their appointing municipalities regarding library events, activities, and issues. However, trustees have a fiduciary obligation to the Library Board and may not release any information that would violate that duty, for example, information that is subject to attorney-client privilege or closed session discussions. Library trustees may not release any information considered a library record under the Michigan Library Privacy Act.

Library Director and Community Relations Coordinator

The Library Director and Community Relations Coordinator are responsible for coordinating the library's media and public relations activities. Employees and trustees (except as provided above) should refer all requests for information about the library, its policies and operations to the Library Director.

Official statements of the Loutit District Library

The director and his or her designee are authorized to make official statements to the public and media on behalf of the Loutit District Library. If the official statement is on behalf of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees President or his or her designee shall make an official statement.

Social Media

Designated staff may maintain library social media accounts as part of their assigned duties. The same standards, principles, and guidelines that apply to Loutit District Library employees in the performance of their assigned duties also apply to employee social media technology use. Posts should inform library users about services, resources, programs, events, promote library use, and encourage dialogue between users and library representatives. Social media posts, as with all library media releases, should be positive in tone and should reflect the values and viewpoint of the library rather than personal opinions. Each social media account will clearly indicate that it is maintained by the library and should have the library's contact information prominently displayed.

Staff members will check the accounts and respond to messages and/or posts in a timely manner, especially during library operating hours. Negative comments or complaints should not be deleted; instead engage with the patron as we would with any other complaint, preferably by moving the discussion to a private venue. Complaints and negative posts may be deleted if harassing, obscene, personally name staff members, or otherwise violate library policies. Upon deletion of a post, a direct message to the poster will be sent explaining why.

Crisis Management

If there is a crisis or incident in the library that requires police or emergency services intervention, the Library Director or the most senior staff person at the library at the time of the incident shall call 911, if possible. The person shall then inform the Library Board President. Depending upon the situation and acting in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, the Library Board of Trustees shall be contacted if necessary and as timely as the situation will allow. If an emergency Library Board meeting is required, the library shall convene such a meeting in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.

Photography

Unless approved in writing by the Library Director, no person may take pictures, videos or capture images by electronic means inside the library. Requests from any person for photographing, videotaping or similar means of capturing images of library patrons in the library or the interior of the library must be approved by the Library Director in advance. All requests are to be referred directly to the Library Director. Any person denied the right to take pictures, videos or capture images in the library, may appeal that decision within ten (10) days of receiving such denial to the Library Board. This provision does not apply to any meeting that is open to the public pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Permission to Photograph the Public

If any person who has received permission to take pictures, videos or obtain images inside the library and such images contain pictures or videos of visitors to or patrons of the library, the person must obtain prior written permission and release for use of the photo or video by the proposed subject of the photo or video. This includes photos taken and/or used by the library. Copies of these permission slips and releases are to be provided to the library. Requests for permission to photograph or video minors under the age of eighteen (18) must be signed by the minor's parent or legal guardian. This provision does not apply to any meeting that is open to the public pursuant to the Michigan Open Meetings Act.

Adopted: March 22, 2005 as *Public Relations Policy*

Revised: April 13, 2010

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