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# Board Policy



## Communication with the Public Policy

### Policy Statement

The Pierce County Library System (Library) is dedicated to communicating with the public to provide services to help meet the needs of the communities it serves.

### Purpose

The Library's Board of Trustees recognizes that to help meet the needs of the communities it serves and to fulfill the responsibilities as Trustees, Library staff, acting on behalf of the Board, must maintain adequate and effective communications with the public.

### Communication Tools

The Library uses a variety of communication tools including, but not limited to, written materials, online content, recorded videos, and in-person or online presentations. The Library solicits advice and opinions from Friends of the Library groups, the Pierce County Library Foundation Board, and people living in the communities the Library serves.

### Definitions

*Communications*: the act or process of providing or exchanging thoughts, opinions, or information through various written, spoken, visual, or other expressive forms.

*Public*: the people constituting a community.

*Confidential information*: information that is exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Act

*Photos and videos*: this policy speaks to photos and videos that can be taken with multiple types of devices including but not limited to cameras, video recorders, cellular devices, phones, tablets, and computers.

## Policy

### Public Audience

The Library communicates and collaborates with people living in its service area, as well as those who have an influence upon people in its service area. The Library communicates with people with varying points of view, and strives to reach the diverse people in Pierce County and ensure equity and inclusion in all communications.

### Purpose of Communication

The Library welcomes the opportunity to respond to requests from the public. The Board affirms it is important for the Library to develop and maintain communications through participation in community activities and by seeking opportunities to collaborate with individuals and organizations to plan and evaluate library services and align those services with community priorities.

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## **Official Communications to the Public**

The Marketing and Communications Department is responsible for the coordination and release of information to the public. Library staff authorized to communicate with the public on behalf of the organization within the scope of their position may use talking points or other Library prepared materials. The Library will not release confidential information to the public.

The Library's external social media and other public information channels are intended for authorized Library communications to the public. Staff is encouraged to use internal communication resources for internal questions, concerns, or other communications, and communicate concerns with their supervisor.

## **News Media Communications**

The Library System welcomes news media photographers and reporters documenting stories or projects that directly involve the Library and its programs, classes and events, resources, and/or services, as long as the photography and reporting do not interrupt library services, the public's enjoyment and access to services, and staff's delivery of services.

## **Public Use of Camera and/or Video in Public Domain**

The Library is a limited public forum and as such, the public may take photographs or videos in the public areas of the library. Individuals should have no expectation of privacy in the public areas of the library. Photography and videotaping are not permitted at Library facilities and/or Library grounds when doing so violates an individual's reasonable expectation of privacy and takes place in a location where an individual has a reasonable expectation of privacy (such as restrooms, offices, staff only workspaces, and designated non-public areas of the library).

Photography and/or videotaping are permitted at Library classes and events provided that it is not disruptive. The Library System may document its services and the public's use of the Library by taking photographs and making video or audio recordings of its programs, classes and events, activities and their participants for use in communications such as print and online communications, news media relations, advertising, social media, or other communication materials.

Taking photos and/or videos are not to impede the public's use of the Library's facilities. Library staff may stop any photography or video recording that appears to interfere with a person's use of the library, the Library System's ability to conduct business, or does not comply with the Library Rules of Conduct which are posted on the Library System's website and at its libraries.

Photos and/or video of specific, copyrighted (or otherwise protected) library materials for the purpose of redistribution is prohibited.

No commercial photography or recording in Library facilities is permissible without the express permission of the Library's Marketing and Communications Director or their delegate. Commercial entities must contact the Marketing and Communications Director or their delegate through phone or email, which is listed on the Library's website. Permission for commercial photography or recording shall be allowed so long as it does not interrupt library services, the public's enjoyment and access to services, and staff's delivery of services and so long as it does not state or imply that the Pierce County Library endorses the commercial entity.

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**Related Policies Procedures**

[Library Rules of Conduct](#)

[Public Records Request](#)

[Public Records Request Process](#)

**Board Policy**

**Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Pierce County Rural Library District on March 13, 1997.**

**Revised February 17, 2000. Revised February 10, 2010. Revised October, 13, 2021.**

**Revised December 13, 2023.**

By the enactment of this policy the Board of Trustees of Pierce County Library System is concurrently rescinding any prior policy or procedure within PCLS that is either in conflict with or expansive of the matters addressed in this policy.