



# The USATC&FJ Inspector General Update



“First be right, then go forward”

FY23 1st Quarter

## IG Update 22-9: Guidance on Personal Social Media Use

On 12 August 2022, the Secretary of Defense released DODI 5400.17, establishing the first department-wide social media policy. In addition to outlining guidance on official social media accounts, this policy also provides guidance on personal social media use by DOD personnel. While personnel are authorized to have personal social media accounts, they must adhere to the following rules:

### **Maintain a clear distinction between personal and official accounts:**

- When initially activating an account, personnel should use personal contact information (email/telephone).
- All personal social media accounts must be clearly identified as personal.
- Accounts must avoid use of DOD titles, insignia, uniforms, or symbols that imply DOD sanction or endorsement.
- Personnel are encouraged to include a disclaimer, such as, *“views and opinions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent views of DOD or its Components.”*
- Personnel can forward, like, or link to official information, provided it does not imply DOD endorsement.

### **Do not disclose non-public information:**

- Personnel are prohibited from disclosing non-public information to further private interests or others’ private interests.
- Personnel must adhere to operations security and unit-level directives (also while deployed).

### **Do not conduct official business on personal social media accounts:**

- Personnel can not use personal accounts to conduct official DOD communications.
- Personnel cannot use personal social media accounts so friends, followers, or private contacts can gain access to DOD programs or seek action from DOD officials.

### **Do not accept compensation for any activity relating to one’s status as a DOD Civilian Employee or Service member:**

- Personnel cannot use their official position or public office for personal financial gain, or the endorsement of any product, service, or enterprise. Use of one’s official position includes use of official titles, photos displaying a connection to one’s DOD status (photo in uniform/wear of lapel pin or lanyard).
- Personnel cannot use their official position for the private gain of friends, relatives, or persons

### **Do not engage in prohibited political activity, as defined in applicable law and regulation.**

- Personnel cannot engage in political activity on their personal social media while in the Federal workplace or while on-duty (telework included).
- Political activity is defined as an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for partisan political party, or partisan political group.

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### References/Resources

- Department of Defense Instruction 5400.17, “Official Use of Social Media for Public Affairs Purposes”
- Section 2635.702 of Title 5, CFR
- <https://www.army.mil/socialmedia/>