

Appendix G USPHS Commissioned Corps SciPAC Twitter Communications SOP

The Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) official Twitter Handle ([@PHS_Scientist](#)) is maintained by the Visibility Subcommittee Twitter Team. For the policies governing the use and dissemination of information using Twitter, see the SciPAC Communication Policy in addition to this appendix.

- I. **Mission Statement:** To promote visibility of Scientist Officers and the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps by establishing an outward-facing, timely platform for sharing SciPAC news and accomplishments.
- II. **Objectives:**
 - a. To increase visibility of Scientist Officers and the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, by highlighting impactful accomplishments of Scientist Officers including publication of scientific manuscripts, volunteer activities, and work activities.
 - b. To inspire camaraderie among Scientist Officers while building interest around topics relevant to Scientist Officers and the general public.
 - c. To raise the profile of Scientist Officers and their work with Commissioned Corps Headquarters, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the general public.
- III. **Audience:** Government employees and officials, candidates/applicants for Commission as Scientist officers and the general public.
- IV. **Messaging:** Through this platform we will demonstrate how the diverse background, extensive training and unique career paths of our Scientist Officers contributes in a substantive way towards meeting the USPHS Commissioned Corps' mission to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our nation.
- V. **Tools, Tactics and Channels:**
 - a. Twitter using three Tweet types:
 - i. “**Retweets**” from a pre-approved Twitter accounts (Section VIII. h. below)
 - ii. “**Original Content Tweets**” generated by the SciPAC Twitter Team, will be batched for bi-monthly submission to SciPAC approvals chain (Section VII.a.iii. below) for clearance and posted upon written approval.
- VI. **Roles and Responsibilities**
 - a. Visibility Subcommittee's Twitter Team composition – lead, co-lead(s), and members.
 - i. **Team Members** will: 1) be familiar with HHS policy documents (Section VIII. a-k. below); 2) have log-in access to [@PHS_Scientist](#) account; 3) participate in monthly Twitter Team meetings; 4) create at least three “Original Content Tweets” with Photo each month including obtaining written permissions from featured Officer(s) and their supervisor; 5) post at least one “Original Content” Tweet and one “Retweet”

during their assigned Posting Period (Section VI.b.i); and 6) monitor the Twitter account.

- ii. **Team Co-Lead** – In additions to all of the same responsibilities as Team Members (Section VI.a.i), will: 7) post additional “Retweets” and “Original Content Tweets” at their discretion at any time during the month to supplement and as relevant events arise; 8) monitor and share overall responsibility for Twitter content and handling with Team Lead; 9) assign and manage Twitter Team member Posting Periods; 10) manage and review Original Content Tweet submission process including verifying Officer and supervisor approval emails; and 11) support Team Lead as needed.
- iii. **Team Lead** – In addition to all of the same responsibilities as Team Members (Section VI.a.i), will: 7) post additional “Retweets” and “Original Content Tweets” at their discretion at any time during the month to supplement and as relevant events arise; 8) monitor and share overall responsibility for Twitter content and handling with Team Co-Lead; 9) submit batch of 15-20 “Original Content Tweets” to SciPAC approval chain, maintain communication, respond to reviews, make edits; 10) maintain and update Twitter Team documents (Twitter Team SOP, Original Content Tweets, SciPAC EB Approval emails, Permissions); and 11) record and report Twitter Team impact using Twitter Analytics to generate SciPAC monthly report (Section VII.d. i) and SciPAC annual report (Section VII.d.ii).

b. Additional Details

- i. **Posting Period:** Twitter Team Lead, Co-Lead, and Members share equally the responsibility of posting (Tweeting/Retweeting) to the Twitter Account. The number of days for posting period is determined by the number of days in the longest month (31) divided by the total number of Team Members. Example: 31 days/6 Team members: Team Lead posts day 1-5; Team co-lead posts day 6-10; Member #1 posts day 11-15; Member #2 posts day 16-20; Member #3 posts day 21-25; Member #4 posts day 26-31.
- ii. **Password:** If/when there are changes made to any of these positions, the account password will be changed as well to ensure a known and limited number of individuals have access to the [@PHS_Scientist](#) account.

VII. **Process and Procedure:**

a. Approvals

- i. Retweets of content from approved followed Twitter accounts (Section VIII. h.), are approved by SciPAC Visibility SC chair. Additional Twitter accounts may be submitted to Visibility SC chair for approval, as needed. Once approved, the [@PHS_Scientist](#) Twitter handle will “follow” these accounts. Twitter Team members will have permission to retweet from these

accounts using the [@PHS_Scientist](#) Twitter handle, at the discretion of the SciPAC Twitter Team Lead, without additional approval. Note: The [@PHS_Scientist](#) Twitter handle will not “follow” or retweet content from Twitter handles managed by the Commissioned Officers Association (COA) or PHS Commissioned Officers Foundation for the Advancement of Public Health (COF)

- ii. “Original Content Tweets” - SciPAC clearance – Every other month, the Twitter Team will submit a list of not more than 20 original tweets with images for approval from the SciPAC chain of command listed below. Prior to submission to the SciPAC chain of command, each of these original tweets must be approved by email by the Scientist Officer featured in the tweet (if applicable). Images of Officers in uniform will be approved for proper wear and appropriateness of the image by the SciPAC chain of command. The original tweets must also be filed on the Visibility max.gov webpage. SciPAC chain of command: 1) SciPAC Visibility Chair (or Co-Chair); 2) SciPAC Chair (or designated EB member and/or CPO).
- b. Responses – [@PHS_Scientist](#) will not respond to comments or direct messaging. It is common practice for governmental Twitter accounts to generally not respond to comments.
- i. Exceptions: Responses may be useful when there is confusion about a scientific fact. In this case, the response would fit in one of the Approvals categories listed above, would refer to primary literature and/or a credible website (e.g., a research institution’s webpage regarding the issue, not Wikipedia or a blog) and may need to be submitted to the SciPAC Approvals chain.
 - ii. Offensive tweets or comments on the [@PHS_Scientist](#) Twitter feed may result in the blocking of the offending Twitter account and/or in reporting specific tweets to Twitter using the report function. The team will follow Twitter’s rules and policies guidelines on what is reported (Section VIII. g.). Blocking of offending Twitter accounts will be done sparingly – without tolerance for nudity/pornographic material and hate speech, or threats directed to USPHS Officers/staff (which we also report to OCISO), at the discretion of the SciPAC Twitter team, without additional approval.
- c. Special Circumstances – USPHS Commissioned Corps Symposium, other conferences with broad attendance by Scientist Officers.
- i. One Twitter Team member attending the symposium will be assigned to generate [@PHS_Scientist](#) content throughout the symposium, obtain permissions from featured Officer(s); and will communicate them to the Twitter Team Lead and Visibility SC Chair for tweeting.
 - ii. Frequency of tweets per business day is one at a minimum; and during this time period a special emphasis should be on topics related to the symposium, but efforts should be made to continue Tweeting/ReTweeting regular content as well.

- iii. Approval requests that would normally route to the SciPAC chain of command will be deferred to the Visibility SC chair during the Symposium. The creation of a list of preapproved tweet topics is recommended to facilitate timely posting.
- d. Reporting Metrics
 - i. Monthly Bullets are generated to include Twitter Team accomplishments for distribution to SciPAC during the monthly PAC call and through the meeting minutes.
 - ii. Annual Report bullets are generated by compiling Twitter Team accomplishments for the Operational Year (Oct 1-Sept 30).

VIII. **Resources**

- a. HHS Social Media Policies
 - i. <http://www.hhs.gov/web/social-media/policies/index.html>
- b. HHS “Getting Started” and “What’s in a Plan”
 - i. <https://www.hhs.gov/web/social-media/getting-started/index.html%20>
 - ii. https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/web/socialmedia/getting_started/whats_in_a_plan.pdf
- c. HHS Third Party Web Agreement and Privacy Impact Assessment (TPWA/PIA)
 - i. <https://www.hhs.gov/pia/index.html>
 - ii. SciPAC’s TPWA/PIA (Office of the Secretary – Renewal effective January 25, 2022-January 24, 2025): <https://www.hhs.gov/pia/index.html#Third-Party>
- d. HHS Website Disclaimers
 - i. <https://www.hhs.gov/disclaimer.html>
- e. Terms of Service Agreement (TOS)
 - i. <https://digital.gov/resources/federal-compatible-terms-of-service-agreements/>
- f. Twitter Privacy Policy
 - i. <https://twitter.com/en/privacy>
- g. Twitter Rules and policies
 - i. <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies>
- h. Twitter Account Verification Process
 - i. <https://help.twitter.com/en/managing-your-account/about-twitter-verified-accounts>
- i. Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) Standard Operating Procedures (Version 7.0 August 3, 2018)
 - i. <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/SciPAC-SOP-2018.pdf>
- j. SciPAC Visibility Subcommittee SOP (Version 6.0 December 16, 2020)
 - i. https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/Visibility_SOP_121620_Final.pdf
- k. SciPAC Communication Policy (July 13, 2018)
 - i. https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/SciPAC_Comm_Policy_Final.pdf
- l. Pre-approved Twitter accounts include:

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- i. US government twitter accounts (officials, offices, agencies, etc.)
- ii. USPHS Twitter accounts
- iii. USPHS Officers
- iv. Public health figures

IX. Changes Since Last Update (November 5, 2018):

- a. Added a Team co-lead to share responsibilities and support Lead.
- b. Updated Responsibilities for Lead and Co-Lead.
- c. Combined Team Member types, Content Creating and Posting, into one “Team Member” role.
- d. Defined posting period calculation and example
- e. Updated number of Tweets/Retweets expected from Team Members during assigned posting period.
- f. Updated Resources (as of January 17, 2022) to include Links to latest versions.
- g. Remove “limit of one Retweet per day” from Process and Procedures Section.
- h. Remove “Cleared Content Tweet” option.
- i. Update frequency and number of “Original Content” Tweets submitted to “not more than 20 Original Content Tweets for review by SciPAC EB chain every 2 months”.
- j. Updated to include SciPAC’s Renewed TPWA/PIA (Office of the Secretary – Renewal effective January 25, 2022-January 24, 2025): <https://www.hhs.gov/pia/index.html#Third-Party>