



Commissioned Corps of the US Public Health Service Scientist Professional Advisory Committee



March 20, 2019

Appendix G: USPHS Commissioned Corps SciPAC Twitter Communications SOP

The Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) official Twitter Handle (@PHS_Scientist) is maintained by the Twitter Team of the Visibility Subcommittee. 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 in general, by highlighting impactful accomplishments of Scientist Officers including publication of scientific manuscripts, volunteer activities, and typical work activities;
 - b. To inspire camaraderie among Scientist Officers while building interest around topics relevant to Scientist Officers and the general public; and
 - 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. **“Cleared Content Tweets”** – repurposing of already cleared information directly from a website or press release. Includes links to the page from which information was pulled.
- iii. **“Original Content Tweets”** generated by the SciPAC Twitter Team, will be batched for 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 – one lead, four posting members and additional content creating members (as needed).
 - i. **Twitter Team Lead** – 1) will be familiar with HHS policy documents (Section VIII. a-k. below); 2) will have log-in access to @PHS_Scientist account; 3) will assign Twitter team members to generate @PHS_Scientist tweets; 4) will post additional “Retweets” and “Cleared Content Tweets” at their discretion during their assigned time period (one week per month); 5) will monitor and have overall responsibility for Twitter content and handling; 6) will submit “Original Content Tweets” for approval SciPAC approval chain; and 7) will maintain communication with SciPAC approval chain.
 - ii. **Twitter Team Posting Members** – 1) will be familiar with HHS policy documents (Section VIII. a-k. below); 2) will have log-in access to @PHS_Scientist account; 3) will create at least one “Original Content Tweet” during their assigned time period (one week per month), including obtaining permissions from featured officer(s); 4) will post at least one “Original Content Tweet” during their assigned time period (one week per month); 5) will post additional “Retweets” and “Cleared Content Tweets” at their discretion during their assigned time period (one week per month); and 6) will monitor the Twitter account;
 - iii. **Twitter Team Content Creating Members** – 1) will create two to three “Original Content Tweet” each month, including obtaining permissions from featured officer(s).
- b. Team members will be responsible for adherence to HHS policy documents (Section VIII. a-k. below).
- c. Twitter Team User Name and Password – log-in information shall be kept close-hold to the Twitter Team Lead, 4 Twitter Team Posting Members, and the Visibility SC Chair. 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”** – An initial list of Twitter accounts included herein (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 while remaining within the posting limit of 1 per business day. 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. **“Cleared Content Tweets”** – Repurposing cleared information from US Government Websites into tweet format will be permitted without additional approval. (e.g., USG verified website links and content, blog content, published articles, etc.). The SciPAC bibliography will be used as a source of cleared information for this tweet type, in order to promote open-access articles written by Scientist Officers.
 - iii. **“Original Content Tweets”** – SciPAC clearance – Every month, the Twitter Team will submit a list of not more than 10 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 CDC 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 or Visibility SC Chair for tweeting.
 - ii. Frequency of tweets will remain at a maximum of 1 tweet per business day; however, efforts should be made to focus all tweets during this time period on topics related to the symposium.
 - 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.

VIII. **Resources**

- a. HHS Social Media policies
 - i. <https://www.hhs.gov/web/social-media/policies/index.html>
 - ii. <https://www.hhs.gov/web/social-media/policies/index.html#publicprivacy>
- b. HHS What's in a Plan document
 - i. <https://www.hhs.gov/web/social-media/getting-started/index.html>
- c. Third Party Web Agreement and Privacy Impact Assessment (TPWA/PIA)
- 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://cdn.cms-twodigitalassets.com/content/dam/legal-twitter/site-assets/privacy-page-gdpr/pdfs/PP_Q22018_April_EN.pdf
- g. Twitter Rules and policies
 - i. <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies>
 - ii. <https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies#twitter-rules>
- 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 6.0)
<https://dcp.psc.gov/osg/scientist/documents/scipac-sop-2017.pdf>
- j. SciPAC Visibility Subcommittee Standard Operating Procedures (Version 3.0)
 - i. <https://dcp.psc.gov/OSG/scientist/documents/SOP-Visibility-201512.pdf>
- k. SciPAC Communication Policy (DRAFT)
 - i. update link once approved and posted
- l. Pre-approved Twitter accounts include:
 - i. US government twitter accounts (officials, offices, agencies, etc.)
 - ii. PHS Twitter accounts
 - iii. PHS officers
 - iv. Public health figures