



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



July 13, 2018

Executive Summary: This document summarizes SciPAC Policy Subcommittee recommendations for the scope and platforms for SciPAC communications, as well as providing SOPs governing the clearance and approval process for SciPAC communications. These communications include SciPAC's engagement in and contributions to social media (i.e., posting messages, comments, documents, and other materials on social media platforms) and dissemination of information to SciPAC members through dedicated internal resources (e.g., SciPAC listserv, Website, Healthy Scientist Newsletter).

Communications from SciPAC might be construed as official endorsement by the United States Public Health Service, the Office of the Surgeon General, and/or HHS OPDIVs. This responsibility must be considered along with the administrative burden of obtaining clearance before posting on social media or distributing to SciPAC officers.

While the individual subcommittees (see Appendix A for examples) will generate their own internal SOPs, the following rules apply to all communications issued by SciPAC.

1. The following communications are prohibited under all circumstances:

- Any communications prohibited by law, regulation or HHS policy, including but not limited to:
 - Communications that violate the Hatch Act (i.e. support of a political candidate/party)
 - Communications that contradict or purport to set new HHS/PHS policy
 - Communications made for an officer's personal benefit
- Any communication that contains obscene, abusive or otherwise inappropriate content that would bring the Corps into disrepute
- Any communication that fails to follow established procedures to gain necessary approval

2. Regardless of platform, the following communications are always allowed without prior approval:

- Sharing communications from an approved source (any HHS OpDiv, OSG, Agency liaisons) without modification (Unless marked as "for internal use only" or otherwise noted as having limited distribution)
- Use of replies/posts already cleared by the SciPAC Executive Board (EB)

- 3. All other communications not discussed below are prohibited without prior approval from EB (or SciPAC Chairperson's designee) and/or the appropriate Agency. This list of prohibited communications includes, but is not limited to, the following:**
- Any post that sets a new SciPAC policy or contradicts existing policy
 - Messages that contain commentary about the policies or positions of the US government
 - All photos of officers during deployment
 - Pictures from non-deployment, professional, official USPHS activities
 - Communications that reference or promote private organizations or commercial products (i.e., uniform components) (Note: All attempts must be made to not promote a single source)
 - Solicitation for donations to SciPAC
- 4. The following communications are allowed for closed SciPAC groups only, without prior approval:**
- ListServ
 - Announcements from CPO/EB
 - SciPAC communications from Subcommittee Chairs
 - SciPAC-sponsored training
 - Job announcements open to PHS Officers (Announcements should be sent to the Career development subcommittee who will collate and post to the listserv as appropriate)
 - Links to any internal or external communication on any other platform (for example, a link to the Health Scientist Newsletter or SciPAC announcement)
 - Facebook SciPAC group
 - Social event announcements
 - Requests for unofficial advice/feedback on topics of general interest from fellow officers
 - Posts from the ListServ
 - Communications from COA/COF
 - Pictures taken at SciPAC events or of Scientist officers at other PHS events
 - Links to any internal or external communication on any other platform
- 5. The following communications are allowed externally, without prior approval:**
- Website
 - Any professionally relevant, broadly useful item from above
 - Scientist Officer Newsletter
 - The Healthy Scientist Newsletter
 - Science and Practice Presentations
 - Links to any other external communication on any external platform (for example, a link to the official Twitter feed)
 - Twitter

- Sharing communications from an approved (any HHS OpDiv, OSG, Agency liaisons) source without modification
- Use of replies/posts cleared by the SciPAC EB (or Chairperson's designee) or Chief Scientist Officer
 - Links to any other external communication on any external platform

Appendices:

Appendix A: SciPAC Subcommittee Webpages

Appendix B: Approval Process for Creation and Use of a SciPAC Communication Platform

Appendix C: Template for SciPAC Communication Platform Standard Operating Procedures

Appendix D: Listserv communications SOP

Appendix E: Website communications SOP

Appendix F: Closed Facebook group communications SOP

Appendix G: Twitter communications SOP

References:

HHS: http://www.hhs.gov/web/socialmedia/getting_started/checklist_social_media_policies.pdf

https://www.hhs.gov/ocio/policy/policy_2010-0003.1_-_ocio.html

CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/guidelines/pdf/social-media-policy.pdf>

AHRQ: <http://www.ahrq.gov/research/publications/pubcomguide/pcguide4.pdf>

GSA: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103565>

FDA:

<https://www.fda.gov/downloads/AboutFDA/AboutThisWebsite/WebsitePolicies/UCM472486.pdf>

SAMHSA: <https://www.samhsa.gov/social-media>

APA: <http://www.apa.org/about/social-media-policy.aspx>

DoD: <http://dodcio.defense.gov/Social-Media/>