

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Federal Bureau of Prisons**



**PROGRAM STATEMENT
Multimedia Communications**

Approved by	 William K. Marshall III Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons
DPI	DIR
Number	1480.06
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Summary of Changes

Program Statement Rescinded:

- 1480.05 News Media Contacts (9/21/2000)

Changes: This reissued policy provides updated guidance on news media engagement with the Bureau of Prisons (Bureau), introduces new standards for multimedia production and dissemination, and incorporates expanded direction on the use of external websites and applications, including social media, to support effective communication with stakeholders and the broader public.

- Updates the program statement title from “News Media Contacts” to “Multimedia Communications.”
- Removes references to the union’s role in representing bargaining unit staff.
- Removes a reference to Resolution 22, Department of Justice (DOJ) (8/3/1998).
- Provides additional clarity for how members of the news media must request an institutional visit or personal interview.
- Removes references to BOPDOCS.
- Provides clarity regarding the permission of news media to use film or photography during institutional visits.
- Provides clarity regarding inmates not being employed or acting as reporters.
- Defines a personal interview.
- Provides clarity regarding who has the final authority to grant or deny interview requests.
- Provides clarity on existing policy-based reasons to deny an interview request.
- Clarifies responsibilities regarding denial of interview requests.
- Provides clarity regarding auditory supervision of personal interviews.
- Provides clarity regarding access to institutional property by members of the news media.

- Removes language regarding transmitting a message to the Central Office.
- Provides clarity regarding the release of information.
- Provides clarity regarding the release of staff names.
- Provides additional guidance regarding the required content to be included in the Institution Supplement.
- Incorporates new language regarding multimedia production, encompassing audiovisual and digital content creation, with updates to modern production practices and enhancements that integrate cloud-based workflows, accessibility standards, and contemporary methods.
- Incorporates new language regarding the Bureau's use of third-party websites and applications, including social media, to support public communication. It establishes guidelines for managing official Bureau social media accounts, designates authorized personnel for media engagement, and outlines standards for content accuracy, verification, and timely correction.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy establishes guidelines for the Bureau of Prisons (Bureau) regarding public communication through news media engagement, multimedia production, and the use of third-party websites and applications, including social media.

It is designed to:

- Ensure the public receives accurate, timely, and appropriate information about Bureau operations, programs, and services.
- Govern media access to Bureau institutions in a manner that protects the safety, security, and privacy of inmates and staff.
- Support the planning, development, and distribution of information primarily originating from the Office of the Director to internal audiences (Bureau staff and inmates), external stakeholders, and the public through timely, cost-effective multimedia productions, in full compliance with applicable federal regulations.
- Define the authorized use and management of official Bureau social media accounts, ensuring content is verified, consistent, and aligned with the Bureau's mission.
- Clarify approval requirements for external use of Bureau-generated social media content.

These provisions apply to all Bureau-managed communications platforms and institution settings and are intended to support transparency while maintaining operational integrity and respect for individual rights.

The term multimedia production as referenced in this policy applies exclusively to the official work product originating from the Office of Congressional and Public Affairs (OCPA), and their

designated staff. This includes, but is not limited to, video, audio, graphic, and digital content created for public dissemination, internal communication, or agency representation.

No other offices, divisions, or staff are authorized to independently produce, release, or distribute multimedia content to the public under the agency's name. All such productions must originate from, or be coordinated through, OCPA to ensure consistency, accuracy, and alignment with agency standards, messaging, and policy.

Audiovisual (AV) production produced at MSTC or not otherwise originating from OCPA must comply with the Program Statement **Audiovisual Productions**.

a. **Program Objectives.**

■ **News Media Engagement**

- (1) The public will be informed about Bureau operations through contacts with news media representatives.
- (2) The privacy and rights of both inmates and staff will be protected, including the right of an inmate not to be photographed or recorded.
- (3) Representatives of the news media will be informed of procedures through which they may request interviews.
- (4) Staff will be able to identify representatives of the news media who qualify to interview inmates in federal institutions.

■ **Multimedia Production**

- (1) Multimedia production activities from the OCPA will be conducted in accordance with applicable federal regulations, and will include compliance with updated digital accessibility standards, data security requirements, and DOJ policies governing multimedia and AV content.
- (2) Multimedia productions from the OCPA will be planned and approved by appropriate authorities. Management controls will be in place to ensure efficiency, incorporating digital distribution needs, metadata standards, and lifecycle management through modern production tools and practices.
- (3) A library of multimedia productions, including AV assets and related files, will be maintained for continuity and compliance with Bureau records management standards.

■ **Third-Party Websites and Applications**

- (1) The Bureau will use third-party websites and applications, including social media, in a manner that:
 - promotes the mission, goals, and objectives of the Bureau and DOJ;
 - ensures compliance with applicable statutes, Bureau and DOJ regulations and policies, and federal government-wide guidance;

- protects individual privacy;
- complies with applicable ethical standards;
- ensures accurate and effective communication; and
- maintains the security of Bureau and DOJ systems and information.

b. **Institution Supplement.** Required. Each institution must develop an Institution Supplement to implement this program statement. The Institution Supplement is to include, at a minimum, guidelines for the implementation of a local media emergency plan, which must include procedures for drafting press releases and statements for an emergency (e.g., escape, walkaway, etc.), the creation of a press pool and where members of the news media are permitted to gather, a comprehensive list of local news media outlets with updated contact information, a designated location for a media center and Public Information Officer (PIO) office area with the equipment/supplies needed for these areas, and procedures for responding to emergent media inquiries received after normal duty hours as directed by the Chief Executive Officer. Prior to implementation, the Institution Supplement must be submitted to the appropriate Regional Director for approval.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The OCPA is responsible for this program statement.

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) is responsible for the Bureau's public and media relations. OPA provides a wide range of public information services to the media, the public, and other government and private sector organizations and agencies. OPA provides assistance to the field by providing technical assistance to institution and regional Public Information Officers (PIO), conducting public and media relations training for Bureau staff, producing and distributing daily news clips, and assisting in coordinating interviews and special media or high-profile tours.

The OPA provides oversight for the creative work produced by the Director's Studio. This oversight applies specifically to:

- AV productions intended for the general public
- Informational products designed for Bureau staff and inmates
- The review and approval of AV productions proposed outside of OPA

In addition, OPA sets standards for digital distribution, accessibility compliance, public-facing content strategy, and modern media quality controls.

The Office of Communications and Multimedia Production (OCMP) plays a central role in managing and safeguarding the Bureau's multimedia and communications work products. OCMP's responsibilities include:

- **AV Leadership:** Serving as the Bureau’s primary point of contact for AV matters, including compliance with DOJ Order 2520.3C. OCMP ensures the AV production approval process is followed, notifies sponsors of outcomes, and maintains official records of approvals and disapprovals.
- **Library and Archives:** Maintaining the Bureau’s multimedia library and structured cloud archives, ensuring long-term preservation and secure access to digital assets.
- **Digital Asset Governance:** Establishing standards for multimedia products, overseeing digital distribution, and coordinating reviews of AV systems and files to maintain quality and compliance.
- **Social Media Strategy:** The Chief, OCMP, manages the Bureau’s social media presence, ensuring that all public-facing content is consistent, accurate, and aligned with broader communications goals. This role oversees the Social Media Coordinator(s) (SMC) and is accountable for ensuring content shared across platforms complies with DOJ and federal standards for media, privacy, security, ethics, accessibility, and records management.
- **Work Product Stewardship:** Overseeing the creation, review, and distribution of multimedia work products to ensure they meet modern media standards and reflect the Bureau’s mission.

Through these responsibilities, OCMP ensures that the Bureau’s communications—whether in AV formats or across social media—are professional, accessible, and strategically aligned.

In accordance with DOJ policy, all components are required to designate a minimum of one SMC. The agency's SMCs operate under the OPA, OCPA, Office of the Director. Only designated SMCs are authorized to create, review, or submit content for posting on the agency’s official accounts. No other staff may perform these functions.

All Bureau social media accounts fall under the purview of the agency’s SMCs. Any request to establish an official division account (e.g., NIC, FPI, HRM) must be formally submitted to and approved by the Bureau’s SMCs. Once approved, the account must operate under the guidance and direction of the SMCs, in accordance with the standards and procedures outlined in this program statement.

SMCs are responsible for:

- **Account Establishment:** Initiating requests to establish new social media accounts through the DOJ Social Media Working Group. Each request must clearly explain the operational need and intended use of the account. SMCs must follow the procedures outlined in DOJ Policy 0300.02.01 for account setup.
- **Account Management:** Overseeing the day-to-day operation of Bureau social media accounts, including creating, scheduling, and monitoring content across platforms to ensure accuracy, consistency, and alignment with Bureau communications goals.

- **Privacy Compliance:** Coordinating with Senior Bureau Official(s), or an authorized designee, before disseminating any content that may contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

Within the Bureau all social media coordination is managed exclusively by the OPA.

PIOs at the institution and regional levels serve as the Bureau's local representatives for public and media engagement. PIO's responsibilities include:

- **Media Liaison:** Acting as the first point of contact for media inquiries directed to their institution or region, while coordinating closely with the OPA to ensure consistency and accuracy in messaging.
- **Information Coordination:** Assisting in the preparation and dissemination of information about institutional operations, programs, and events, ensuring alignment with Bureau-wide communications standards.
- **Event Support:** Coordinating with OPA on interviews, tours, and other media-related events, particularly those that may be high-profile or sensitive in nature.
- **Compliance and Standards:** Ensuring that all public communications adhere to DOJ and Bureau requirements for privacy, security, ethics, accessibility, and records management.
- **Reporting and Escalation:** Promptly notifying OPA of significant media activity, emerging issues, or requests that may require national-level oversight or approval.
- **Training and Development:** Participating in public and media relations training provided by OPA and applying best practices in their daily responsibilities.

3. MEDIA ENGAGEMENT PROTOCOLS

§ 540.61 Authorization.

(a) A news media representative who desires to make a visit or conduct an interview at an institution must make application in writing to the Warden, indicating that he or she is familiar with the rules and regulations of the institution and agrees to comply with them.

This will be accomplished by the news media representative using the BP-A0232, Media Representative's Agreement form.

(b) As a condition of authorizing interviews and making facilities available to conduct an interview, the news media representative shall recognize a professional responsibility to make reasonable attempts to verify any allegations regarding an inmate, staff member or institution.

(c) A representative of the news media is requested to provide the Bureau of Prisons an opportunity to respond to any allegation, which might be published or broadcast prior to distribution.

(d) A representative of the news media shall collect information only from the primary source. A representative of the news media may not obtain and use personal information from one inmate about another inmate who refuses to be interviewed.

(e) The Warden may be contacted concerning discussions or comments regarding applicability of any rule or order.

(f) Failure to adhere to the standards of conduct set forth by this rule for the news media representative constitutes grounds for denying that news media representative, or the news organization which he or she represents, permission to conduct an interview.

(g) Any questions as to the meaning or application of this subpart are resolved by the Director of the Bureau of Prisons.

§ 540.62 Institutional visits.

This section applies to all external organizations, including members of the news media, embassy and consulate members, and congressional members and their staff.

(a) A media representative shall make advance appointments for visits.

Visit or tour requests must be submitted in writing to the designated PIO at the correctional institution or the Residential Reentry Management office where the visit or tour is being requested.

(b) When media representatives visit the institutions, photographs of programs and activities may be taken, and media representatives may meet with groups of inmates engaged in authorized programs and activities. An inmate has the right not to be photographed and not to have his or her voice recorded by the media. A visiting representative of the media is required to obtain written permission from an inmate before photographing or recording the voice of an inmate participating in authorized programs and activities.

Permission to film or take photographs will be at the discretion of the Warden.

- Use of the inmate's name, identifiable photographs, or voice recording is not recommended.
- The BP-A0233, News Interview Authorization form must be used by the media when making a request for interviews, photographs, voice recordings, and appointments for institution visits with inmates.

- The original copy of the BP-A0233, News Interview Authorization form is to be placed in the inmate's central file, and a copy is to be sent to the media representative making the request.

(c) The Warden may suspend all media visits during an institutional emergency and for a reasonable time after the emergency.

Specifically, the Warden may suspend media visits if the continued presence would endanger the health or safety of the visitor (s), or if the visitor (s)' continued presence would disturb the good order of the institution and/or likely cause serious unrest.

(d) An inmate currently confined in an institution may not be employed or act as a reporter.

This includes all inmates who are in the custody and care of the Bureau, including inmates in community confinement. Inmates may not receive compensation for their correspondence with representatives of the news media.

(e) Interviews by reporters and others not included in § 540.2 may be permitted only by special arrangement and with approval of the Warden.

The Warden may approve institutional visits and interviews requested by writers for the purpose of writing a book.

Such approval is contingent upon the writer:

- Submitting verification of their previously published book(s); or
- Submitting a letter from a recognized publishing company that indicates the publisher's contractual support of the book.

§ 540.63 Personal interviews.

This section applies to all external organizations, including members of the news media, embassy and consulate members, and congressional members and their staff, and defines personal interviews as those involving these same groups.

(a) An inmate may not receive compensation or anything of value for interviews with the news media.

(b) Either an inmate or a representative of the news media may initiate a request for a personal interview at an institution.

(c) Visits by the news media to conduct personal interviews are subject to the same conditions stated in § 540.62. A media representative shall make a request for personal interview within a reasonable time prior to the personal interview.

Interview requests must be submitted to the designated PIO at the correctional institution or RRM office where the inmate is assigned.

(d) Staff shall notify an inmate of each interview request, and shall, as a prerequisite, obtain from the inmate written consent for the interview prior to the interview taking place. The written consent or denial becomes part of the inmate's central file.

The inmate who agrees to an interview must complete the BP-A0233, News Interview Authorization form.

(e) As a prerequisite to granting the interview, an inmate must authorize the institutional staff to respond to comments made in the interview and to release information to the news media relative to the inmate's comments.

(f) The Warden shall normally approve or disapprove an interview request within 24 to 48 hours of the request.

The decision-making authority for granting or denying official interview requests or visits in Bureau institutions or Residential Reentry Centers (RRC) resides solely with an institution's Warden or the Residential Reentry Manager. The Warden or Residential Reentry Manager of a facility has the authority to approve, deny, or approve an interview with modifications to the original request. They are responsible for assessing issues related to each request on a case-by-case basis and their decision is final.

(g) The Warden shall document any disapproval. A request for interview may be denied for any of the following reasons.

(1) The news media representative, or the news organization which he or she represents, does not agree to the conditions established by this subpart or has, in the past, failed to abide by the required conditions.

(2) The inmate is physically or mentally unable to participate. This must be supported by a medical officer's statement (a psychologist may be used to verify mental incapacity) to be placed in the inmate's record, substantiating the reason for disapproval.

(3) The inmate is a juvenile (under age 18) and written consent has not been obtained from the inmate's parent or guardian. If the juvenile inmate's parents or guardians are not known or their addresses are not known, the Warden of the institution shall notify the representative of the news media of the inmate's status as a juvenile, and shall then consider the request.

(4) The interview, in the opinion of the Warden, would endanger the health or safety of the interviewer, or would probably cause serious unrest or disturb the good order of the institution.

(5) The inmate is involved in a pending court action and the court having jurisdiction has issued an order forbidding such interviews.

(6) In the case of unconvicted persons (including competency commitments under 18 U.S.C. 4244 and 4246) held in federal institutions, interviews are not authorized until there is clearance with the court having jurisdiction, ordinarily through the U.S. Attorney's Office.

In some districts there may be a standing authorization for interviews, in the absence of individual “gag orders,” but in other districts all pretrial inmates may need to be cleared upon request for interviews as the court having jurisdiction may have issued an order limiting or forbidding interviews. The appropriate U.S. Attorney’s Office must be contacted to determine whether such an order is in force or if there are any objections to this inmate participating in a media interview.

(7) The inmate is a “protection” case and revelation of his or her whereabouts would endanger the inmate's safety.

(8) In the opinion of the Warden, the interview may portray the agency or institution as endorsing or glorifying an inmate’s view or crime (e.g., providing notoriety, revictimization of victims).

(h) Interviews are normally held in the institution visiting room during normal weekday business hours. The Warden may:

(1) Determine that another location is more suitable for conducting the interview;

(2) Limit interview time for the entire institution if the Warden determines that the interviews are imposing a serious drain on staff or use of the facilities;

(3) Limit to one one-hour interview per month for an inmate in segregation, restricted, holdover, control unit, or hospital status if required by special security, custodial, or supervisory needs; and

(4) Limit the amount of audio, video, and film equipment or number of media personnel entering the institution if the Warden determines that the requested equipment or personnel would create a disruption within the institution.

The Warden may also approve an interview but deny the use of audio, video, and recording devices/equipment.

(i) In conjunction with the personal interview, if the member of the media wishes to tour the institution, he or she must comply with the provisions of § 540.61.

Requests to tour a facility must be handled in accordance with the section titled, “§ 540.62 Institutional visits,” of this program statement.

(j) Interviews are not subject to auditory supervision.

Official interviews with representatives of the news media must be afforded the same privilege as counsel or attorney visits regarding auditory supervision. However, interviews will be visually supervised in accordance with operational procedures and visiting policy.

§ 540.64 Press pools.

(a) The Warden may establish a press pool whenever he or she determines that the frequency of requests for interviews and visits reaches a volume that warrants limitations.

(b) Whenever the Warden establishes a press pool, the Warden shall notify all news media representatives who have requested interviews or visits that have not been conducted. Selected representatives are admitted to the institution to conduct the interviews under the specific guidelines established by the Warden.

Unless otherwise specified and granted permission by the Warden, representatives of the news media are not permitted access to institution property for the use of film or photography but may film from nearby public property.

(c) All members of the press pool are selected by their peers and consist of not more than one representative from each of the following groups:

(1) The national and international news services;

(2) The television and radio networks and outlets;

(3) The news magazines and newspapers; and

(4) All media in the local community where the institution is located. If no interest has been expressed by one or more of these groups, no representative from such group need be selected.

(d) All news material generated by such a press pool is made available to all media without right of first publication or broadcast.

4. § 540.65 Release of information.

(a) The Warden shall promptly make announcements stating the facts of unusual, newsworthy incidents to local news media. Examples are deaths, inside escapes, and institution emergencies.

(b) The Warden shall provide information about an inmate that is a matter of public record to the representatives of the media upon request. The information is limited to the inmate's:

- (1) Name;
- (2) Register number;
- (3) Place of incarceration;

Only provide the specific Bureau institution name or the specific RRM field office that oversees the inmate in community confinement. The specific location of an inmate is not releasable while they are in community confinement (e.g., at an RRC or in home confinement.)

The release of inmate designation information is prohibited. An inmate's designated place of incarceration becomes public information only after the inmate has arrived at the designated institution.

- (4) Age;
- (5) Race;
- (6) Conviction and sentencing data: this includes the offense(s) for which convicted, the court where convicted, the date of sentencing, the length of sentence(s), the amount of good time earned, the parole eligibility date and parole release (presumptive or effective) date, and the date of expiration of sentence, and includes previous Federal, state, and local convictions;
- (7) Past movement via transfers or writs;

(e.g., institution name or RRM field office name and dates assigned, including commitment date and how committed).

- (8) General institutional assignments.

The Warden of each institution, or their designated representative, is solely responsible for contact with the media as a representative of the institution.

(c) Information in paragraphs (b)(1) through (8) of this section may not be released if confidential for protection cases.

(d) A request for additional information concerning an inmate by a representative of the news media is referred to the Public Information Officer, Central Office, Washington, DC.

(e) The Public Information Officer, Central Office, Washington, DC shall release all announcements related to:

- (1) Bureau of Prisons policy;
- (2) Changes in an institutional mission;

(3) Type of inmate population; or

(4) Changes in executive personnel.

Release of Staff Names. As outlined in the Program Statement, **Release of Information**, releasable information about staff is limited to the following:

- Name
- Position Title (past and present)
- Grade (past and present)
- Salary (past and present)
- Duty Station (past and present)
- Duty Station Address (past and present)

Guidelines. When a Bureau staff member is directly involved in a newsworthy event, the Bureau and/or the DOJ, Office of Public Affairs, may release the name of the staff member in response to a media request unless a designated official at the Bureau determines that:

- it is reasonable to believe that:
 - i. release could reasonably compromise a pending investigation; or
 - ii. release could compromise a confidential source.
- it is reasonable to believe that:
 - iii. a disclosure could lead to harassment, violence, or retaliation against the staff member, other federal staff members, or the staff member's family; or
 - iv. a disclosure could lead to press inquiries that would interfere with the staff member's work.
- the staff member was killed or seriously injured and their family has not yet been notified;
- the staff member is the subject of allegations of wrongdoing, and an internal investigation or disciplinary process is pending or imminent;
- the staff member's identity was publicly known at the time of the event, but the incident has been obscured by the passage of time and is no longer the subject of substantial news attention; or
- there is a specific and articulable basis upon which to conclude the staff member's name should not be released for operational or investigative reasons other than those listed above. If the Bureau decides to withhold a staff member's name under this section, it would be required to advise the DOJ's Office of Public Affairs as soon as possible.

Agency/Staff Consent. If the Bureau consents to the release under Section b.2 of this program statement, and the information is not maintained under the staff member's name, the Bureau and/or the DOJ, Office of Public Affairs, may release the name of the staff member.

In those instances, in which the information is maintained under the staff member's name, and therefore the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. § 552a) must be considered, the information may be released if the employing agency and the staff member consent or if there is an exception under the Privacy Act that applies. In either case, the staff member must be notified of the release, if possible.

Photography and Recording. The Bureau may photograph, film, video record, or otherwise capture images and audio of individuals present on government and/or public property or attending Bureau events for official purposes, including but not limited to public information, historical documentation, security monitoring, training, public affairs, program evaluation, or media relations.

By entering government and/or public property or participating in a Bureau sponsored event, individuals (including visitors, media representatives, contractors, volunteers, invitees, and attendees) acknowledge and consent to such photography, filming, recording, and the subsequent use, reproduction, distribution, or publication of those images/audio by the Bureau or its authorized representatives, without further notice, compensation, or the requirement of an individual release form.

Individuals who do not wish to be photographed or recorded may remove themselves from the area where such activity is occurring or notify Bureau staff in advance to discuss reasonable accommodations where feasible and consistent with security and operational needs.

This policy does not apply to areas where individuals have a reasonable expectation of privacy, nor does it authorize the release of images in a manner that violates applicable privacy laws, security protocols, or Bureau policies regarding PII.

Signed Releases. All multimedia productions (including photography, video, and audio recordings) involving Bureau inmates, where they are easily recognizable, require a signed release authorization prior to production or dissemination. The BP-A0928, Audiovisual Production Proposal form must be used for release authorization.

The BP-A0928, Audiovisual Production Proposal form must be signed and a copy must be sent to the OPA's multimedia team. Inmates must be informed that participation is voluntary, without compensation, and that refusal will not affect their status or privileges. In group settings, whenever there is a possibility that an individual inmate may be identifiable through hairstyle, tattoos, or other distinguishing features, a signed release must be obtained prior to the photo's use. When photographs are submitted as part of an OPA project, the corresponding releases must be included with the initial submission or made available upon request.

All releases must be witnessed and certified by designated Bureau staff to ensure compliance with DOJ regulations.

Scope of Authorization. Signed releases authorize the Bureau (and contractors acting on its behalf) to record, edit, and use multimedia content for legitimate Bureau purposes, including training, public information, and outreach. Releases cover present and future use, with no entitlement to compensation. Distribution is limited to audiences consistent with DOJ and federal regulations, ensuring protection of privacy and security interests.

Restrictions and Safeguards.

- No multimedia content may be produced or released without a valid signed release.
- Content involving inmates or children must be reviewed by the institution's Warden (or designee) and the OCPA to confirm compliance with privacy, security, and protection case requirements.
- Releases (BP-A0928, Audiovisual Production Proposal forms) and related materials must be stored securely and made available for audit or review by DOJ oversight offices.
- In cases where disclosure could compromise safety, security, or confidentiality, multimedia content must not be released, even with a signed authorization.

Oversight and Compliance. The OCPA, retains final authority over the release of multimedia productions for external distribution. All practices must comply with the latest DOJ regulations and federal privacy protections, including those applicable to minors and vulnerable populations.

5. DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

- a. **Digital Media Governance.** The Bureau reserves the right, at its own discretion, to create more restrictive rules governing use of social media, per DOJ policy 0300.02.02.
 - **Asset Management.** Digital Media assets including photos and videos must be cleared for public release and comply with privacy rules.
 - **Storage, Security, and Retention/Disposal.** The Bureau will comply with federal record statutory and regulatory requirements, as well as the DOJ's policies and guidance, for managing federal records created within, or posted to, social media.
 - will identify or develop applicable records retention schedules that cover record content created within components or posted to social media.
 - will prevent deletion or disposition of any records created or captured using social media, except in accordance with approved records disposition authority in the form of an applicable General Records Schedule or an approved agency records retention schedule.
 - will ensure that any publicly posted content issued by Capstone Officials (or any user delegated authority by the Capstone Official to communicate on their behalf) be treated as permanent records in accordance with approved Capstone records retention schedules and DOJ policies on Capstone Officials' records.

- **Security.** The Bureau will follow security practices outlined in annual Security Awareness training and password requirements available in Bureau Information Security and DOJ Cybersecurity policies and standards.
- **Passwords, access, and recovery.** Passwords must be securely stored by an SMC and access limited to those with a need to know to ensure continuity of operations. An approved government email may be used for multi-factored authentication. Password information must be limited to authorized staff only.
- **Directories.** The SMCs must ensure that all of the Bureau's official social media accounts are registered with the U.S. Digital Registry and the DOJ's Social Media Directory.
 - Disposal. No AV production (including limited-use, low-cost productions) will be disposed of without prior clearance from the Director of the OCPA, or designee.
- **Exemptions.** AV productions and equipment that are exempt from the provisions of this program statement are:
 - i. Still photography prints, slides, enlargements, and audiotapes, unless used for a slide presentation or exhibition in which the total production and processing cost exceeds \$5,000.
 - ii. Graphic artwork.
 - iii. Any product resulting from surveillance or evidentiary procedures or from the need for incident documentation.
 - iv. Products provided through the exclusive use of photomechanical, cartographic, x-ray or microfilm/fiche/form methods, or products resulting from photo-instrumentation, or items with a security classification of confidential or higher.
 - v. Video equipment purchases intended primarily for surveillance, incident documentation, or other criminal or evidentiary purposes.
 - vi. Information updates, conference summaries, or other programs that are marked to show a useful life of less than one year or materials produced for one-time dissemination to staff.

b. **Content Standards and Compliance.** Writers must use plain language techniques when drafting content for social media purposes.

Content posted by DOJ staff on social media accounts will comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794d). Under Section 508, agencies must give staff members with disabilities and members of the public access to information that is comparable to access available to others.

The video portion of any AV production will be closed-captioned for hearing impaired viewers. All public-facing and inmate-facing media must comply with Section 508 and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), including captions and, when necessary, transcripts or audio descriptions.

The Bureau will comply with all applicable federal privacy laws including, but not limited to, the Privacy Act of 1974 and the E-Government Act of 2002 (Pub. L. No. 107-347, 116 Stat. 2899), OMB Memorandum M-10-23, the DOJ's website privacy policy, and the DOJ's policies and guidance for managing and protecting PII (DOJ Order 0601).

The Bureau will ensure that all social media tools are covered by a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA), when required by law or policy, prior to the use of a social media tool.

The Bureau will, to the extent feasible, post a privacy notice on all social media accounts. The privacy notice must include:

- An explanation that the social media tool is not a DOJ website or application; that it is controlled or operated by a third party; and that individuals may wish to review the privacy policies of those third-party web sites or applications before using them to understand how and when those websites collect, use, and share the information individuals make available by using their services;
- An explanation of how the component will maintain, use, and/or share PII that becomes available through the use of the social media tool, as required by law, OMB guidelines, and DOJ policy.
- An explanation that, by using the social media tool to communicate with the Bureau, individuals may be providing non-governmental third parties access to PII;
- A link directing users to the Bureau's official website;
- A link directing users to the Bureau's website privacy policy; and
- A link to any applicable adapted or other PIAs.

The Bureau will follow the Executive Branch and DOJ standards and requirements, particularly the guidance on the Hatch Act of 1939 (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321–732).

The following conditions are to be adhered to as it pertains to the use of social media:

Social media may not be used to endorse any product, service, or enterprise or give the appearance of governmental sanction, except in furtherance of statutory and official authority to promote products, services, or enterprises.

Social media may not be used in a manner intended to induce, coerce, or otherwise further the individual private gain of government officials or the private gain of persons or organizations with which the officials are affiliated in a nongovernmental capacity.

Social media may not be used to publish non-public information or information clearly unauthorized for disclosure. If a component is unsure whether information is public, the component must consult with an authorized designee, to determine the status of the information at issue before taking any action to disclose the information to the public.

Social media may not be used to engage with or endorse politicians, their staff, or any group or individual that is engaged in political activity, as covered by the Hatch Act of 1939. The Hatch Act defines political activity as an activity directed toward the success or failure of a political party, a candidate for partisan political office, or a partisan political group.

Because linking to or reposting opinion content can imply endorsement of the opinion expressed, the OPA will consult with the Office of General Counsel prior to linking or reposting opinion content. This includes opinion content expressing approval of Bureau actions, unless the opinion content was authored by a current federal governmental official writing about their office's mission. For further explanation on how the Bureau may dispel the impression of endorsement, see DOJ Policy 0300.02.02, Section D.

- **Governmental Entity Content.** The Bureau may link to or repost content generated by government organizations, including federal, state, tribal, intergovernmental and international organizations where the United States is a member if the content is in compliance with all other policies.
- **Nongovernmental Entity Content.** The Bureau may link to or repost nongovernment content if the non-governmental content: (a) is related to or would otherwise advance the DOJ's mission or work or (b) serves a valid law enforcement or other DOJ interest. Because linking to or reposting content may in some circumstances imply endorsement of the entity and/or the content that is being reposted, components are strongly encouraged to consult with their Ethics Official, communications/public affairs office, and/or general counsel's office before linking to or reposting content from nongovernmental sources.

c. AV Production and Archival Oversight.

- **Director and Executive Staff Video Production.** AV productions involving the Director or Executive Staff must be scheduled in advance through the Office of the Director's Executive Assistant and/or Secretariat. Proposed scripts or talking points must be submitted to the OCPA prior to filming, with final materials due at least 15 days before production. Virtual participation, remote recording, and digital scheduling tools may be used when appropriate.
- **AV Library.** The OCPA will serve as the repository for AV productions.

d. Official Presence and Public Engagement Standards.

- **Agency Branding.** Content will include appropriate branding to distinguish the Bureau's activities from those of nongovernment actors.
- **Reference to Official Bureau Website.** A link to the Bureau's official website must be visible on all social media accounts.

- **Account Visibility.** All social media postings must be public.
- **Moderating Comments from the Public.** Many social media tools allow for the submission of user-generated content. Moderating comments, including censoring and deleting, is generally prohibited. In exigent and extraordinary situations (threats, unauthorized posting of PH, cyber-attack risk, etc.), the Bureau must contact the OCPA or its component security office for guidance. In addition, the Bureau may consider whether the user comment violates the terms of service of the social media site. If so, the user comment may be reported to the social media site as a violation of its terms of service per the site's reporting requirements.
- **Directly Interacting with the Public.** Official DOJ social media accounts must refrain from interacting directly with an individual, organization, or any other member of the public through social media (specifically, responding to a post or comment by another user) given privacy, records, ethics, and other concerns generated by such interactions.
- **Linking.** The Bureau social media content may provide links to sites that require a paid subscription (sometimes referred to as a "pay wall"), but it must not indicate in any way that it is encouraging members of the public to subscribe. A disclaimer must be placed on the profile to make clear to the public that the Bureau is not encouraging subscription.
- **Direct Messaging.** Direct messaging is not permitted. When possible, the function must be disabled. When possible, public message threads must be closed (i.e., the public's commenting on or replying to government posting must not be permitted).

REFERENCES

Program Statements

Release of Information
Audiovisual Productions

Bureau Forms Prescribed by 1480

BP-A0232 Media Representative's Agreement
BP-A0233 News Interview Authorization
BP-A0928 Audiovisual Production Proposal

Federal Statutes

5 U.S.C. § 552a, The Privacy Act of 1974
5 U.S.C. §§ 7321–7326, The Hatch Act of 1939
29 U.S.C. §794d, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
44 U.S.C. § 3501, The E-Government Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-347, 116 Stat. 2899

Department of Justice Policy

DOJ Policy 0300.02 series (1/10/2018): Use of Social Media to Communicate with the Public, Social Media Account Management and Approval (0300.02.01), and Social Media Content Management Requirements and Procedures (0300.02.02)
DOJ Order 0601, Privacy and Civil Liberties, (5/14/2020)
DOJ Order 2520.3C, Audiovisual, Graphics, and Photographic Activities, (7/16/1991)
DOJ Privacy Policy, (5/23/2025)

Other References

OMB Memorandum M-10-23 titled “Guidance for Agency Use of Third-Party Websites and Applications” (6/25/2010)

ACA Standards

Performance-Based Standards and Expected Practices for Adult Correctional Facilities (5th Edition): 5-ACI-1A-22

Performance-Based Standards and Expected Practices for Adult Correctional Facilities (5th Edition): 5-ALDF-7F-01

Standards for the Administration of Correctional Agencies (2nd Edition): 2-CO-1A-25

Records Retention Requirements

Requirements and retention guidance for records and information applicable to this program are available in the Records and Information Disposition Schedule (RIDS) on the Bureau's intranet site.