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SUBJ/SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR UNIFORMED SERVICE MEMBERS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF NAVY//

REF/A/DOC/DOD MEMORANDUM/19FEB25//
REF/B/DOC/DOD INSTRUCTION 5400.17 CH-2/24JAN23//
REF/C/DOC/ DOD INSTRUCTION 8170.01 CH-1/24AUG21//
REF/D/DOC/SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5720.44C CH-2/10APR19//
REF/E/DOC/10 U.S.C. SECTION 801 ET SEQ.//
REF/F/DOC/U.S. MARINE CORPS 2021 SOCIAL MEDIA HANDBOOK//
REF/G/DOC/NAVY SOCIAL MEDIA HANDBOOK//
REF/H/MSG/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC/171606ZJUL24//
REF/I/DOC/DOD DIRECTIVE 1344.10/19FEB08//

NARR/REF A IS THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DoD) MEMORANDUM REMINDER ON
SERVICE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS.
REF B IS THE DOD INSTRUCTION ON OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PUBLIC
AFFAIRS PURPOSES.
REF C IS THE DOD INSTRUCTION ON ONLINE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND
ELECTRONIC MESSAGING.
REF D IS THE SECNAV INSTRUCTION ON DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY PUBLIC AFFAIRS
POLICY AND REGULATIONS.
REF E IS THE UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE.
REF F IS THE USMC SOCIAL MEDIA HANDBOOK.
REF G IS THE NAVY SOCIAL MEDIA HANDBOOK.
REF H IS THE ALNAV PROVIDING GUIDANCE ON THE POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY PERSONNEL.
REF I IS THE DOD DIRECTIVE ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES BY MEMBERS OF THE
ARMED FORCES.//

RMKS/1. The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense released reference
(a) requesting the Secretaries of the Military Departments provide
guidance reminding all Service Members of the relevant Departmental
policies governing the expression of their own political opinions and the
traditions and norms of military service.

2. Service Members may establish social media accounts for personal,
non-official use. Personal social media accounts must be clearly
identifiable as personal accounts and may not be used to conduct official
Department of the Navy (DON) or DoD communications, unless by exception

identified in paragraph 3.26.a of reference (c). Use of military titles or appearance in uniform alone is not prohibited on personal social media accounts. However, Service Members must ensure that personal social media accounts avoid use of DON or DoD titles, insignia, uniforms, or symbols in a way that could imply DON or DoD sanction or endorsement of personal content.

Where confusion or doubt is likely to arise regarding the personal nature of social media activities, Service Members are encouraged to include a disclaimer clarifying that their social media communications reflect only their personal views and do not necessarily represent the views of the DON, DoD, or the United States. As the position and grade of individual Service Members increase, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between personal opinions and official positions of the DON or DoD. Senior personnel are highly encouraged to include a disclaimer on personal social media communications.

a. A sample disclaimer reads: "The opinions and views expressed here belong solely to the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Defense (DoD) or its components. Any mention of commercial products or services does not imply DoD endorsement. Additionally, the presence of external hyperlinks does not signify DoD approval of the linked websites or their content, products, or services."

3. Service Members are permitted to use personal social media accounts to forward, like, or link to official information, provided it is done in a manner that does not express or imply DON or DoD sanction or endorsement of any personal content, and does not result in the unauthorized disclosure or dissemination of non-public information (or unclassified information that reveals classified information when aggregated). While Service Members may generally express their personal views on public issues, uniformed service brings certain limitations to expression, including on social media.

a. Service Members are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) (reference (e)), and Navy or Marine Corps regulations while on and off duty. Certain provisions of reference (e) restrict the expression of Service Members, including but not limited to: Article 88, Contempt Towards Officials; Article 92, Failure to Obey an Order or Regulation; Article 133, Conduct Unbecoming an Officer; and Article 134, Disorders and Neglects to the Prejudice of Good Order and Discipline or Conduct of a Nature to Bring Discredit Upon the Armed Forces. In accordance with references (b) and (c), language that may tend to diminish the confidence in or respect due to his or her superior officer(s) is prohibited to be published by Service Members, per the UCMJ.

b. Service Members are encouraged to refrain from media engagement in matters of U.S. Government, DoD, and DON policy.

4. References (h) and (i) provide non-exhaustive lists of permissible and prohibited political activities by Service Members. Service Members may not engage in partisan political activity while on duty and should avoid inferences that their personal political activities imply, or appear to imply, official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement by the DON or DoD.

5. This ALNAV is not all-encompassing or an authoritative source for all

regulations pertaining to the use of social media by Service Members.
For further guidance, Service Members should review the references.

- a. Reference (f) can be found at
<https://www.marines.mil/portals/1/docs/2021usmcsocialmediahanbook.pdf>
- b. Reference (g) can be found at <https://www.navy.mil/Social-Media/>
- c. Reference (h) can be found at
https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Portals/55/Messages/ALNAV/ALN2024/ALN24061.txt?ver=GshurlJAR0_ynNu6T3Qwsg%3d%3d

6. Released by Mr. Terence G. Emmert, Acting Secretary of the Navy.//

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