

Disinformation, Misinformation, or Fake News?

Disinformation is false, inaccurate, manipulated, confusing, or misleading information deliberately spread with the intent to deceive and manipulate. It promotes disagreement, sows discord, creates distrust of government institutions and undermines the democratic process. In more extreme cases, disinformation incites violence and harms the values of our democracy.

Misinformation is false, inaccurate, or misleading information that is shared without the intent to deceive or manipulate.

Fake news includes news stories that are completely false - the information is invented, with no verifiable sources, facts, or quotes. This can also include satire that can be mistaken as factual.

None of these include legitimate criticism, protest, or censure of government actions, institutions, or processes.



Analyze and Research

- ✓ Is it fact, opinion, entertainment, education, or something else?
- ✓ Is the data valid and from a reputable source?
- ✓ Is the headline trying too hard to get your attention?
- ✓ What can you learn about the author(s)?
 - Are they trying to influence you?
 - Were they paid to create or contribute to the information?
 - Are they qualified and credible subject matter experts?



Check Facts and Sources

- ✓ Investigate the original source.
- ✓ Don't forward information if the source is anonymous.
- ✓ Check the website domain. The material on the site reflects its host. *.gov* and *.edu* sites tend to be more trustworthy.
- ✓ Consider using non-profit, non-partisan fact checking sites.
- ✓ Ask a librarian or law librarian for help.
- ✓ Beware of "deep fakes."

How can you spot or stop the spread of disinformation, misinformation, or fake news?



Arizona's courts recognize that there are people, organizations, and foreign interests that intentionally instigate or seed misinformation using social media platforms, bots, and artificial intelligence tools with the goal of undermining public confidence in government institutions, including courts."

– Chief Justice Robert Brutinel



Consider Bias

Bias is a belief, attitude, or prejudice in favor of or against a thing, person, issue, or group.

If the information and data highlight only one position and exclude balanced facts and context, it is biased.



To learn more and to read the final report from the Arizona Supreme Court's Task Force on Countering Disinformation visit the Arizona Judicial Branch website at: <https://www.azcourts.gov/cscommittees/Task-Force-on-Countering-Disinformation>.

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Establishing Arizona Judicial Branch Social Media Accounts

A recommendation from the Arizona Supreme Court
Task Force on Countering Disinformation



The Recommendation

Social media sites are increasingly relied on for news and information. Courts and members of the judicial branch are at risk of being undermined with the increase in fake websites or accounts created to spread disinformation and misinformation, undermining trust in courts.

Today more than ever courts must increase outreach, transparency, and access to strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the judicial system. Official social media sites help courts reinforce access to justice and share accurate and timely information and emergency messaging.

With Arizona's urban and rural expanse and unpredictable natural events like wildfires, floods, and monsoons it is important to be able to communicate timely and important information using social media.

If a court cannot immediately use these social media accounts, it should secure them and request verification to reduce the likelihood of the name being taken by others.

The Benefits of Establishing and Maintaining Social Media Accounts

Courts in Arizona are recommended to establish and maintain at least one verified social media account and have a social media policy in place to:

- keep the public and media informed about court events;
- notify the community quickly and efficiently in emergencies;
- to timely counteract disinformation; and
- to provide accurate information to help the public better understand court policies and procedures and rule of law.



Before Using Social Media Accounts

- Decide on which social media sites will work best for your court. Establish those accounts and request verification to avoid others from creating a fake site with your court's name.
- Establish a social media policy. Include what content will be posted and won't and acceptable response if interacting with the public.
- Decide who will have access to accounts and who is primary and back-up for managing the accounts.
- Decide and establish acceptable response times for posting.
- Inform employees and others on the policy and provide ongoing training as needed. [See Social Media 101.](#)
- Consider checking with your local government to see if there is an established handle or naming convention that your court can use. A profile name (may be your social media handle or official court name) and an appropriate image, such as your court seal or a picture of your courthouse.



@Handles

A social media handle is concise and descriptive and designed to be used across social media and organization to cross-promote.

[@MaricopaClerk](#) – County name changes for Clerk of Superior Court in each county

[@SuperiorCourtArizona](#) – Maricopa County Superior Court on Facebook

[@MohaveCourts](#) – County name changes; site includes information for multiple courts



Verification Badge
on Twitter

Twitter Handle

Az Supreme Court 2,731 Tweets

Az Supreme Court @AZCourts

Official Twitter account for the Arizona Judicial Branch & your source for news/info about courts & law. Retweets and follows are not endorsements.

Phoenix, AZ azcourts.gov Joined February 2010

377 Following 5,424 Followers

Az Supreme Court @AZCourts · 12h

Happening today July 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. AZ Time: How to Apply for a Protective Order, an [AZCourtHelp.org](https://www.azcourthelp.org) free legal talk. Online only. Register to attend online from anywhere:

Public Legal Talks and Clinics for Those Going to C...
Free workshops and clinics offered by the courts and law libraries in Arizona. Clinics are offered on a ...
[azcourthelp.org](https://www.azcourthelp.org)

You Retweeted

Maricopa County Clerk @MaricopaClerk · Jul 13

FY: Smart and Safe Arizona Act, Prop 207, is a voter initiative that appeared on the Nov 3, 2020 Arizona general election ballot. The Clerk's website now has a Prop 207 resource page available.

#NCSCSM101
Social media tips for
the court community

Include a picture, video or gif
with every post. You'll be
surprised how much your page
engagement will improve.

ARIZONA JUDICIAL BRANCH

Court Seal

Court Name

Handle

Follow us on Facebook
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facebook

Arizona Supreme Court
@ArizonaSupremeCourt

Home
Posts
Reviews
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Photos
About
Community

Like Share Suggest Edits

Watch Video Send Message

1.3 out of 5 - Based on the opinion of 6 people

Community
2,203 people like this
2,462 people follow this
2,769 check-ins

Arizona Supreme Court
July 7 at 9:53 AM

Free Legal Talk Series happening July 13 - 20, 2021

Free Legal Talk Series

Social media is one of the most powerful and cost-effective, albeit underutilized, marketing tools for sharing the court's message. Courts, however, have been slow to tap into the unique advantages of popular platforms. More and more Americans look to social media as their primary source of news, information, and entertainment, as well as social connection. Public discourse today happens on social media. Failing to include social media in the court's communication strategy can only widen the gap between what the public expects and what the court delivers.

– [Social Media Marketing for Courts, NCSC Joint Technology Committee, December 2018](#)

Tutorials and Resources

Step-by-step instructions to set up an official court account

<https://aspireinternetdesign.com/social-media-blogging/quick-guide-setting-social-media-accounts-business/>

Step-by-step instructions to request verification of established accounts:

https://fanbooster.com/blog/how-to-get-verified-on-social-media/#elementor-toc_heading-anchor-0

Twitter verification FAQ and application process

<https://help.twitter.com/en/managing-your-account/twitter-verified-accounts>

Digital.gov: Improving the Accessibility of Social Media in Government

<https://digital.gov/resources/improving-the-accessibility-of-social-media-in-government/#specific>

National Center for State Courts (NCSC): Social Media and the Courts Network

<https://www.ncsc.org/topics/media/social-media-and-the-courts/social-media/social-media-101>

For Courts

<https://www.ncsc.org/topics/media/social-media-and-the-courts/social-media/courts>

For Judges

<https://www.ncsc.org/topics/media/social-media-and-the-courts/social-media/forjudges>

Social Media Handles: The Complete Guide

<https://www.brafton.com/blog/social-media/social-media-handles/>

Open Graph

<https://www.freecodecamp.org/news/what-is-open-graph-and-how-can-i-use-it-for-my-website/>