

Disinformation, Misinformation, & Fake News

Disinformation, misinformation, and fake news promotes disagreement and conflict, creates distrust, and weakens the democratic process. In more extreme cases, it encourages violence and creates permanent damage to society.

Disinformation is false, inaccurate, or confusing information intentionally spread to mislead or manipulate others.

Misinformation is false, inaccurate, or confusing information shared without the intent to mislead or manipulate.

Fake News involves false news stories - the information is made up, with no provable sources, facts, or quotes.

None of the above include satire, parody, criticisms, complaints, or protests of government actions, agencies, or processes.

How can you spot or stop the spread of disinformation, misinformation, and 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



Analyze and Research

- ✓ Is it fact, opinion, entertainment, education, or something else?
- ✓ Is the data real and did you check the facts and sources?
- ✓ Is the headline trying too hard to get your attention?
- ✓ Is the information current?
- ✓ Search the author's background to see if they are qualified.

Ask: Are they trying to sell something or influence you?
Are they subject matter experts?



Check Facts and Sources

- ✓ Investigate the story.
- ✓ Don't share information if you don't know its source.
- ✓ Check the website address. *.gov* and *.edu* sites tend to be more trustworthy.
- ✓ Consider using non-political, not-for-profit fact checking sites.
- ✓ Ask a librarian or law librarian for help.



Consider Bias

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

Ask: Does the information and data provide only one position and leave out balanced facts and context?



For more information visit the Arizona Supreme Court's Countering Disinformation Task Force webpage at <https://www.azcourts.gov/cscommittees/Task-Force-on-Countering-Disinformation/Resources>