



Criminal Research Specialist – Social Media Use Policy

The Criminal Research Specialists will only utilize social media to seek or retain information that:

1. Is based upon a criminal predicate or threat to public safety; or
2. Is relevant to the investigation and prosecution of suspected criminal incidents; the resulting justice system response; the enforcement of sanctions, orders, or sentences; or the prevention of crime; or
3. Is useful in crime analysis or situational assessment reports for the administration of criminal justice and public safety.

The Criminal Research Specialist staff shall not use their own personal accounts to perform any searches via social media. Instead, they will use the specified CRS accounts to search publicly available information via social media sites. There shall be absolutely no interaction between the CRS personnel and the subject/group. The accounts shall be used solely for monitoring and viewing “open” profiles. The CRS staff will not try to “friend”, “follow”, “like”, “post”, etc. on any of the subjects’ pages or information. Any violation of this policy is a direct violation of MPD Policy and will result in disciplinary action.

Additionally, the CRS staff will not change or alter the CRS social media accounts in any way unless instructed to do so by the CRS Supervisor. The CRS accounts shall not be used for any purposes that are not work-related.

After a major incident (such as a homicide or shooting), the CRS personnel shall try to obtain information in reference to the victim’s or suspect’s social media accounts. Any information found in these accounts shall be relayed to the detective in a Preliminary Investigative Report.

The method behind finding any information found via social media must be documented properly in the report. For example:

- The following information was obtained from Accurint’s “Virtual Identity Report”.
- The following information was obtained by searching the phone number xxx-xxx-xxxx through the Facebook search function.

Additionally, if an individual is found by searching any of their known associates, the source individual must be noted.

If social media has been found, the website links and relevant screenshots must be sent to the detective. It is ultimately the job of the detective to determine accuracy, validity, and/or authenticity of the information. Information obtained by the CRS via social media may not be submitted as evidence. The detective must subpoena the information for it to be admitted to court. Social media postings should not be disseminated to outside agencies, unless approved by the CRS Supervisor.