**Guidance: Research Using Social Media**

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**What do researchers need to do to access data on Social Media?**

* Researchers are fully responsible for meeting social media platform Terms of Service, Privacy Statements, or other site requirements prior to collecting data for research purposes. Data from social networking sites are subject to Terms of Service established by the platform.
* Researchers must consider the expectations of privacy and intent of the social media users when they post information. For example, having a log-in and password constitutes restricted access which triggers an expectation of privacy.
* Social media users may not be familiar with the tools that researchers may use to access data; in general, researchers should consider data to be private unless the data are fully de-identified such that it is not reasonable to expect that the researcher could re-associate the data with the individual participants.
* Researchers must obtain the permission of site moderators when conducting research on moderated sites.
* Researchers must inform participants in research studies conducted on social media platforms of the platform’s privacy policies/terms of use that they may view and/or edit in their own account on that platform.

**Sharing Research Datasets**

* Researchers must adhere to the terms and conditions of the data provider or source, including social media platforms.
* Data sharing must comply with the IRB approved data sharing plan and the terms of the funding agreement.