

**CALIFORNIA BACKGROUND INVESTIGATORS ASSOCIATION – ANNUAL CONFERENCE**  
**CCN 1035-28000** **REVISED 09-15-24**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this session is to provide CBIA with assistance in vetting their applicants via social media. Will discuss/show ways to do this and discuss common problems when vetting your applicant and laws regarding social media.

- I. Topics to be covered
  - A. Why not just ask our applicants for their social media?
  - B. Who uses what social media?
  - C. Searching for your target
  - D. Digging for information
  - E. Documenting your findings
- II. Why not just ask?
  - A. CA Labor Code 980 prohibits asking for accounts, account names, passwords, etc.
  - B. Applicants disclose info they want you to know, not the stuff they want hidden
- III. Who uses what social media?
  - A. What is social media?
  - B. Outline the various social media platforms by category
    - 1. Traditional, video, forums, instant messaging, gaming/chatting, money
- IV. Searching for your target
  - A. Cold accounts often needed for using these apps
  - B. Where to start? Facebook gives the best search feature
    - 1. Search by name and city. Suggested match algorithm is strong
    - 2. Note any screen name themes and profile pictures. These can be used to cross-reference accounts on other platforms or reverse image search
  - C. People often have multiple accounts on same platform. I don't know why. Often will "friend" the accounts, so alternate accounts will appear in their friends list
  - D. Look for posts related to accounts on other platforms. People tend to re-use screen names. Reverse image searching on Google.
  - E. The account's visible name can be changed, the web address cannot. Often contains true name.

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- F. When this fails, look for your target's mom. Moms like social media, oversharing, and hate protecting personal identifying information. Public photos, posts, friends list, etc. Dads are grouchy and dislike social media.
  - G. Look for your target's references, particularly friends / classmates. You may find more open information related to your target.
- V. Digging for information
- A. Our ability to search for information on an applicant is limited because we are not writing a search warrant. Erased posts / photos are not going to be found in this situation.
  - B. Do we covertly friend them? Do we just use what is publicly-viewable?
  - C. Review the more public accounts in their circle. Moms overshare, friends who are not applying don't care to hide unsavory posts.
  - D. Google search tools. Search for screen names, email addresses. May reveal forums frequented or other social media platform accounts or online dating apps.
    - 1. Reverse image searching. How to do it, what will it give us?
  - E. Cashapp /Venmo. Entering a phone number will show if they have an account. Friending will show us public transactions.
- VI. Documenting your findings
- A. What we find today could be gone tomorrow. Screenshot what you want to preserve. Print screen button and paste into paint, snipping tool.
  - B. Organize your screenshots so you know where they came from. Label your images, separate into folders
  - C. 4K Download app suite to capture video.