

# MSOF QUICK-GUIDE NAVIGATING A PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE

SUCCESS IN PUBLIC AND ONLINE VENUES

## SPECIAL OPERATIONS FAMILIES BALANCING SECURITY & A CAREER

Families should know how to navigate public and online outlets with appropriate caution, comfort, and safety. Practicing good personal, family, and operational security habits helps reduce stress and enables families to thrive. Special Operations families need to pursue their interests; however, our families often delay or opt out of educational advancement, jobs, or other personal or professional opportunities because they are unsure how to navigate military life-related stress and security risks over long periods of time.

- A 2018 MSOF survey showed **54%** Special Operations family members wanted information about navigating professional or educational opportunities.
- Often families are unsure of the name they can/should use online or in official spaces.
- Families may need guidance about what should not be shared online or in public outlets.

Security and operational security are a real concerns, but every aspect of your life does not need to be secret and hidden. Individuals and families can navigate security concerns and minimize risk practicing good habits and utilizing community advice. It is important to feel safe, confident, and capable of pursuing your interests because these are essential qualities of strong families capable of thriving in the Special Operations community.

## ORGANIZATIONS WANT A PUBLIC PRESENCE

A professional, public/online presence is uniquely different from having a personal social media page. Personal social media accounts allow nicknames and few personal details. Some things about your personal life should never be posted in online venues, but modern professional outlets require legitimate facts and participation. Many jobs, educational outlets, and institutions compel or require participation in professional, online outlets such as business sites and professional business communities and networking sites. Navigating these spaces will continue to be important as the online space grows in prominence and necessity and influences modern work, education, and social outlets.

Families may be caught off-guard by modern professional practices associated with media, marketing, networking, and collaboration. You should know what to anticipate in academic and professional outlets so you are prepared to fully participate.

- **What roles would demand a professional, online presence?** Service on a board, education/higher education programs, publishing, job applications, business website, educational forums, public awards or honors, etc.
- **What outlets/platforms impact modern businesses and professionals?** Publicly reportable information: nonprofit filings, publications, published articles and blogs, business websites, LinkedIn, Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter, etc.



MILITARY  
SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
FAMILY COLLABORATIVE

## PROFESSIONAL OUTLETS & UNDERSTANDING SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

Deciding how to navigate a presence in academic and professional spaces can be complicated, stressful, and take time. You should have what may be difficult conversations with your service member considering decisions you need to make.

- **Talk to your service member about what you should or should not do to ensure both safety and success for you and your family.** This conversation is critical for family unity and support. For some families, these considerations may impact college-age children instead of the spouse.
- **Your level of concern may vary depending on your goals and professional aspirations.** Consider the professional goals you have. This will help you establish a good understanding of how you should navigate many professional issues. This is important for personal achievement and confidence.
- **Your need for security may vary depending on your service member's rank, job, unit, or personal preference for caution, secrecy, and security.** Talk to your service member to understand military job-associated risks and concerns. Establish a preferred level of caution that immediate family members should utilize.

## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: PROFESSIONAL PRESENCE IN ONLINE OR PUBLIC RESOURCES

Below are a few decisions you should consider to minimize stress and display continuity.

- **Choose a professional name to utilize.** Family members should have a conversation with the service member to determine what name best suits their security concerns and professional goals. It is possible for threatening entities to identify service members through a family member's online information. *\*See MSOF's tool for deciding on a professional name.*
- **Decide how to list your physical location.** Use your country, state, or a large city instead of home address, if necessary.

### Additional Resources

1. **MSOF's Quick Guide: Navigating Professional Name-use: A Special Operations Family Tool**
2. **MSOF's Quick-Guide: Personal, Family, and Operational Security: Thriving Securely**
3. **USSOCOM Operational Security PDF:** <https://www.socom.mil/FFRP/Documents/Family%20PSEC%20Trifold.pdf>
4. **FBI's Resource for Scams and Safety:** <https://www.fbi.gov/scams-and-safety>
5. **Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Information:** <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0272-how-keep-your-personal-information-secure>

*The Military Special Operations Family Collaborative is a 501(c)3 organization founded in 2018 to enable all Special Operations families to live well. To learn more about the work of MSOF, please subscribe to our newsletter, visit our website, or find us on social media.*

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