



## Addressing Facebook impersonators

Facebook does not allow fake or imposter accounts. If you come across an account that is impersonating you or your agency you can report them through the Facebook system and request the account be removed.

## Agencies using Facebook

- Boise, Idaho, Police Department
- Richmond, Virginia, Police Department
- Cumberland County, Maine, Police Department
- University of Tennessee Police Department

## International Association of Chiefs of Police

1-800-THE-IACP  
socialmedia@theiacp.org  
www.IACPsocialmedia.org

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# FACEBOOK FACT SHEET

## What is Facebook?

Facebook is a social network site that allows users to create profiles, send messages, search for other users, create networks of friends and fans, post images and videos, and share content. Facebook users consist of both individuals and organizations that develop pages containing information and content that can be generated through Facebook or by linking to another site such as YouTube, Flickr, or Twitter. Once users have established profiles, they can “friend” individuals or “like” organizations.

## Why should law enforcement care about Facebook?

Over 1900 law enforcement agencies have pages on Facebook. These agencies are able to use Facebook to connect with their communities, post news and alerts, investigate and even solve crimes using information they collect through the site.

**Audience:** With over 901 million active users, Facebook can help law enforcement agencies reach a large and diverse audience.

**Immediacy:** Facebook allows users to update their page in real time, notifying the public immediately of events, news, or emergency conditions.

**Transparency:** By allowing the community to engage in dialogue with officers, agencies with Facebook accounts can achieve a new level of transparency.

**Cost:** Setting up a Facebook page is free. The only cost is the amount of time spent maintaining it, which can be as much or as little as you deem appropriate.

## How do you get started?

Go to Facebook.com and follow the instructions to create a page. Remember to read the terms of service before signing up. It is easy to get a page up and running without technical expertise. Be sure to let people know you have a Facebook presence. For example, Facebook allows you to post a link on your existing department Web page.

## Uses for your Facebook page

- **Press Releases** – You can post a link to department press releases. Facebook allows you to disseminate information when and where you

want instead of waiting for traditional media outlets to pick up the story.

- **Dialogue with the Community** – Facebook gives you the option of allowing for public comments on your page. This can be a great way to get feedback, hear opinions, and engage in dialogue with the community you serve. The community will be having conversations about your department with or without you. By allowing their comments on your page, your agency has the ability to respond and become a part of those conversations.
- **Amber Alerts** – You can use this service to post Amber Alerts or share links from your state’s Amber Alert Facebook page.
- **Road Closures, Weather Alerts, and Other Warnings** – Distribute quick, important information immediately to a large audience by posting warnings and alerts on your Facebook page.
- **Suspect ID** – Facebook allows you to upload photographs and video to your page. By posting surveillance footage or suspect photographs in conjunction with the number to your agency’s tip-line, the public is able to provide valuable information. This is also a faster and less costly way of disbursing information that may have previously been posted on bulletin boards around your jurisdiction.
- **Recruitment** – Link to recruitment information or highlight academy graduations and other recruit awards on your page. This will give potential recruits insight they may not get anywhere else.
- **Education** – You can use Facebook as an educational tool for crime prevention or other community outreach and educational pursuits. By using photographs, text, and video, your agency can distribute helpful information to your community that can be viewed at any time.
- **Promoting Your Events** – Let a wide audience know what is going on in your area by posting event information.