



Gag Provisions Embedded in Federal Scientific Integrity Policies Enacted to date 10/24

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Policy: <https://www.usda.gov/directives/dr-1074-001>

“When reporting scientific findings or communicating with the media or the public in their official capacities as USDA employees, USDA scientists should refrain from making or publishing statements that could be construed as being judgments of, or recommendations on, USDA or any other Federal Government policy, unless they have secured appropriate prior approval to do so. Such communications should remain within the bounds of their scientific or technological findings, unless otherwise authorized.”

National Institutes of Health

Policy: <https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Final-NIH-Scientific-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

“Allow NIH scientists and other covered individuals to express their personal views and opinions to the media with appropriate written or oral disclaimers, including on social media, subject to the limitations of Government ethics rules, HHS supplemental ethics regulations, social media regulations, and obligation to protect nonpublic information.²⁶ NIH scientists and other covered individuals may name NIH as their employer as one biographical fact among several; however, their title and position cannot receive more prominence than any other biographical fact. They should not be sourced by the media as an NIH representative and shall refrain from making or publishing statements that could be construed as being judgments of, or recommendations on, NIH or any other Federal Government policy, including the use of NIH or other U.S. Government seals or logos, unless they have secured appropriate prior approval to do so.¹⁷

Footnote 27 “These provisions are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower protection.”

Social Security Administration

Policy: https://www.ssa.gov/evidence/documents/SSA-2023-0048-0002_Scientific%20Integrity%20Policy%20Final%20050624.pdf

“SSA scientists and researchers shall refrain from making or publishing statements that could be construed as being judgments of, or recommendations on, SSA or any other Federal Government

policy, unless they have secured appropriate prior approval to do so. Such communications shall remain within the bounds of their scientific or technological findings, unless specifically otherwise authorized.”

###