



New H-1B Social Media Vetting Rules: Top 10 Things Employers Need to Know

Insights

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The federal government just rolled out a sweeping new social media vetting requirement that will reshape the visa process for H-1B workers and their families. Beginning December 15, all H-1B applicants – along with their H-4 spouses and children – must make their social media profiles public so consular officers can review their online activity and work history as part of expanded security screening. The State Department's December 3 announcement is the latest in a growing series of pressures on the H-1B system, which already includes heightened investigations, new fee requirements, and intensified employer scrutiny. Here are the top 10 things your business needs to know – and what you should do in response.

1. Social media disclosure will now be mandatory for all H-1B and H-4 applicants

Applicants (and their spouses and children) must allow consular officers to view publicly accessible posts, photos, comments, connections, and biographies across declared platforms.

2. Profiles must be made public starting December 15

Consulates will not complete adjudication if accounts are private or inaccessible. This applies globally and will affect all interviews conducted on or after that date.

3. Officers will review work history and online activity for red flags

The State Department will use social media content to verify employment backgrounds, identify inconsistencies, and flag potential security concerns.

4. Inconsistent online profiles could be problematic

Any mismatch between an applicant's online profile and the H-1B petition (job title, employer, duties, dates, education) may lead to follow-up questioning or delays.

5. Posts from dependents can impact the principal worker's visa

A spouse's or child's online statements, images, or political posts may trigger enhanced scrutiny for the entire family unit.

6. Content moderation and digital media work may draw extra review

Applicants with backgrounds in content moderation, disinformation/misinformation work, fact checking, or “sensitive online activity” may receive special attention.

7. The rule mirrors earlier changes imposed on student visas

After a multi-week freeze earlier this year, F-1 applicants (student visas) were already required to undergo online-presence screening. The same model now extends to H-1B employment visas.

8. Expect slower processing and more administrative delays

Interviews will take longer, officers will review more information, and more cases may be diverted into 221(g) “administrative processing.” This could delay things by weeks or months.

9. International travel for H-1B workers is now riskier

Employees traveling over the holidays or early next year may face return delays if they cannot meet the new public-profile requirement or if their online activity triggers further vetting.

10. This comes amid a broader H-1B enforcement push

The new social media rule doesn’t sit in a vacuum. It follows several other revisions to the H-1B system:

- A new \$100,000 entry fee for certain new H-1B workers abroad
- A proposed rule to replace the random lottery system with a weighted, wage-based process for selecting recipients
- A Labor Department initiative targeting wage, placement, and discrimination violations

What Employers Should Do Now

- **Notify all H-1B staff and dependents** about the December 15 requirement.
- **Advise employees to review their social media presence** for accuracy and consistency with petition materials.
- **Build additional lead time into travel plans and visa-stamping schedules.**
- **Prepare for longer adjudications** and possible administrative processing delays.
- **Conduct internal documentation checks** to ensure job titles, duties, and work history match publicly visible information.
- **Coordinate with your FP immigration counsel** to review plans for employees with complex backgrounds, sensitive online content, or upcoming travel.

Conclusion

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