STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

One survey indicates that 76 percent of police officers use social media to look for information about crimes.
See wired.com/story/why-police-should-monitor-social-media-to-prevent-crime/

HOW POLICE GAIN ACCESS TO YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Public profiles - set your profile to private!
   - Police create fake, realistic-looking profiles and send follow requests to you or your friends
   - Verify: make sure that you know who operates the account before you accept! NEVER add people you do not know
   - If police follow your friends they can see pictures of you, comments you leave, and posts you are tagged in

WHAT LAW ENFORCEMENT LOOKS FOR

2. Posts or captions by a suspect to identify their location
   - The geotag of a crime scene to look for profiles of people who have recently been there
   - Facebook "statuses" or Instagram captions
   - Photos of "contraband" (e.g., guns, drugs, or money)
   - Gang terminology or colors
   - If an officer does not immediately find something "suspicious," they can continue to monitor an account

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

3. Police can use social media information as evidence to secure warrants
   - Police can use this information as evidence against you in court
   - Police can use the list of people you follow to monitor and collect information on your friends (or use your friends' to track you!)
   - Information can be kept in government files to be used against you in the future
   - Police officers may also disclose the information they find on social media to federal agencies, including U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement (ICE)

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

4. Do not allow tagged photos - remove any tags
   - Disable geotags
   - Do not post, send any messages, or make any comments about weapons, drugs, fighting, or any illegal activity
   - Do not answer messages from people you do not know