



# ADVICE

## Playing It Safe On Social Media

The online harassment of scientists and others often accompanies an animal rights campaign against the organization where these persons are employed. With that in mind, here are a few tips for limiting risks when it comes to social media interactions.

### **Select your audience carefully**

Americans for Medical Progress strongly urges research and animal care staff to adjust Facebook settings so that only friends and family can view their posts.

### **Discuss risks with family members**

Occasionally, animal rights activists have been known to target the family members of those who conduct animal studies. Therefore, have a discussion about the risks. Encourage other family members to join you in setting limits as to who can view what is posted.

### **If targeted, take screenshots**

If a post on one of your social media feeds sounds threatening, take a screenshot to preserve the information. This is important, in case the poster later decides to edit or remove the comment.

### **Inform security of harassment or unusual activity**

If you believe you are being targeted by animal rights activists on social media. Avoid the urge to respond and inform security staff at your facility ASAP. They may have thoughts on how to manage the situation. They may also advise when and if the authorities should get involved.

### **Avoid online debates**

Heated online discussions never result in one party being declared “the victor.” While many of us are passionate about research and highlighting the need for animal studies, venues such as the comments section of Facebook rarely serve as the home to reasoned discussion when the role of animals in research comes up.