



HHS YouTube Guidance

This guidance applies to all of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). Operational Divisions and Offices within the Department may create guidance and establish policies that are more restrictive if the appropriate management chooses.

Last updated: April 1, 2012 | [Directory of HHS YouTube Channels](#)¹

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¹ <http://newmedia.hhs.gov/tools/youtube.html>





GETTING STARTED

[YouTube](#)²  owned by Google, is a free online video streaming service that allows anyone to view and share videos that have been uploaded by registered users. HHS YouTube Channel activities are managed by the HHS Center for New Media (hhsCNM).

A list of all HHS YouTube Channels can be found at our [Who's on YouTube page](#)³.

Do I need a YouTube Channel?

YouTube is the most well-known and prominently used video-sharing network. Over [3 billion videos are viewed every day](#)⁴ . Users span all demographics, and every minute [48 hours](#)⁵  of video are uploaded to YouTube.

However, not every office needs its own YouTube Channel. Remember that people find most videos via search or because they are referred directly to them by friends. A very limited number of people are likely to actually view a YouTube Channel.

The following factors should be considered when deciding whether to create and maintain your own YouTube Channel:

- Is there enough content to warrant its own channel? Advice: At least (15) videos should be posted to your channel within six months.
- Has there been, or should there be a strategic decision made to centralize YouTube efforts in your agency, office or program?
- Do you have the financial resources to regularly produce video content and maintain the channel?
- Do you have the staff resources to maintain a channel? This is especially important if you decide to allow comments on your videos, which is strongly encouraged.
- Can you instead leverage an existing channel associated with your division and office to upload video(s) from a single project.

How Do I get an official channel for my Office?

Adding new channels to the [HHS Terms of Service \(TOS\) Agreement](#)⁶ consists of the following steps:

- Get approval from appropriate management and develop a strategic plan for using the channel.

² <http://www.youtube.com/>

³ <http://newmedia.hhs.gov/tools/youtube.html>

⁴ http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics

⁵ http://www.youtube.com/t/press_statistics

⁶ <http://newmedia.hhs.gov/standards/tos.html>



- [Create your YouTube account](#)⁷ .

Email the following information to the hhsCNM at newmedia@hhs.gov⁸:

- Account Name
- Link to Account homepage
- Content Manager/Point of Contact
- Content Manager Email

If applicable:

- Content Manager #2
- Content Manager #2 Email

The hhsCNM will review with appropriate management to verify approval of the YouTube Channel.

The hhsCNM will send a request to the Federal YouTube liaison for the account to be added to the list of HHS channels that apply to the TOS Agreement. Requests are sent directly after they are reviewed.

Unfortunately, at this time we do not receive notice of when the account has been moved under the HHS TOS Agreement. Instead an Agency will have to notice the changes on its own.

Channel Name

The name of the channel should clearly tell viewers who owns it. It should represent the author agency, office or program. Most people don't know acronyms, however. Please try not to use them. Be creative.

Benefits of the HHS TOS

A number of benefits come with the agreement with Google, Inc. These include, but are not limited to:

- *Legal restraints removed.* Agencies posting to the HHS Channel are not required to sign an indemnification clause.
- *Length restriction removed.* The 15-minute time limit on videos is removed. There is a 2GB size limit.
- *Branding features activated.* Certain areas within the Channel and in the playback view are made available for branding, including the placement of banners and images.

⁷ http://www.youtube.com/create_account

⁸ <mailto:newmedia@hhs.gov>

Branding Your Channel

Once the channel has been moved under the HHS TOS, your branding tabs will change. The tabs that are enabled under the HHS TOS include:

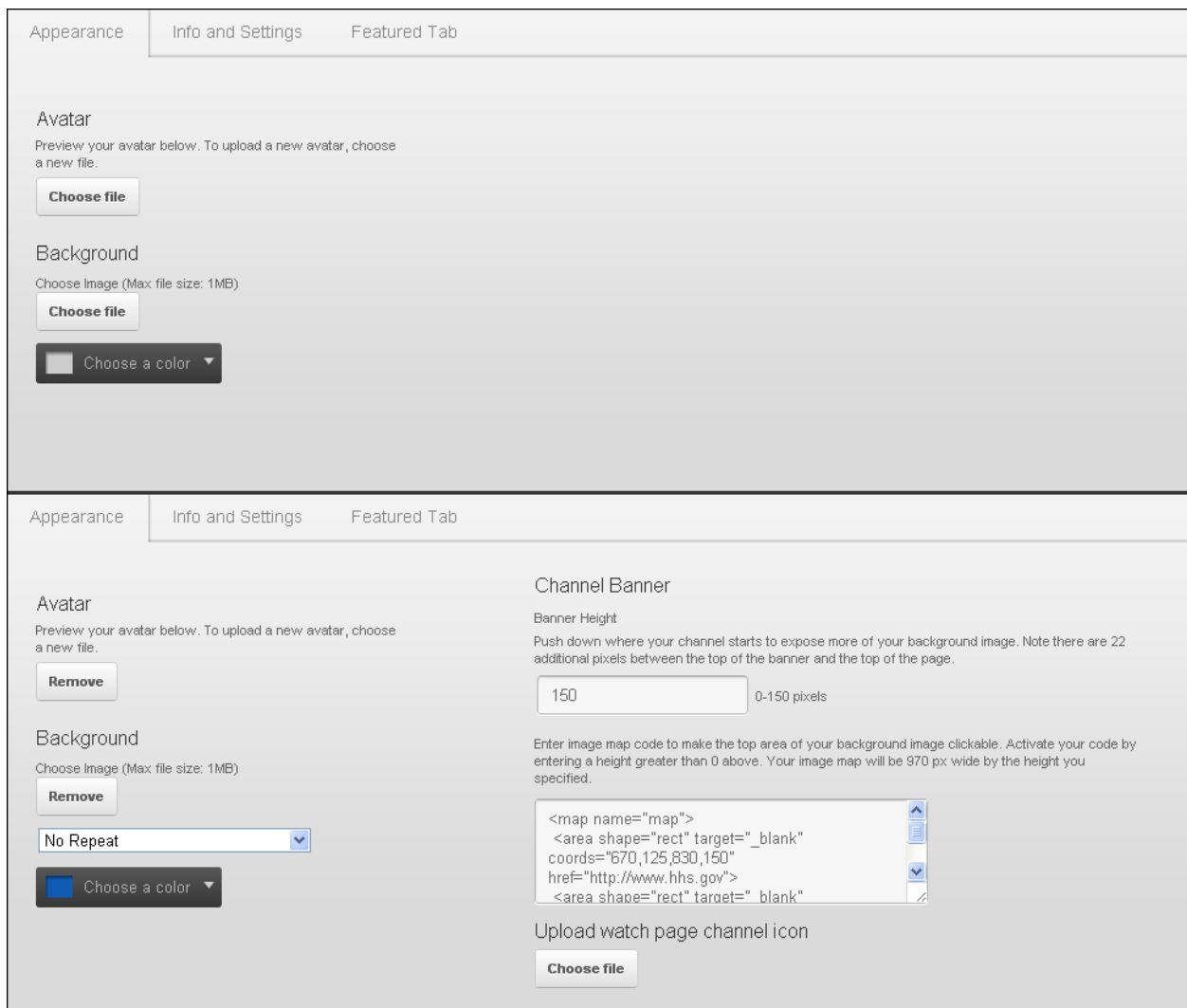
- Appearance
- Info and Settings
- Featured Tab
- Mobile Settings

A full tutorial on how to take advantage of new channels can be found here:

<http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/static.py?hl=en&guide=1734705&page=guide.cs> 

The following images will help you recognize when the new branding options have been enabled under the TOS.

Appearance



The image displays two screenshots of the YouTube channel branding settings page, specifically the 'Appearance' tab. The top screenshot shows the 'Avatar' section with a 'Choose file' button, the 'Background' section with a 'Choose file' button and a 'Choose a color' dropdown, and the 'Channel Banner' section with a 'Banner Height' input field set to 150 and a 'Choose a color' dropdown. The bottom screenshot shows the 'Avatar' section with a 'Remove' button, the 'Background' section with a 'Remove' button, a 'No Repeat' dropdown, and a 'Choose a color' dropdown. The 'Channel Banner' section includes a text area for image map code and an 'Upload watch page channel icon' section with a 'Choose file' button.

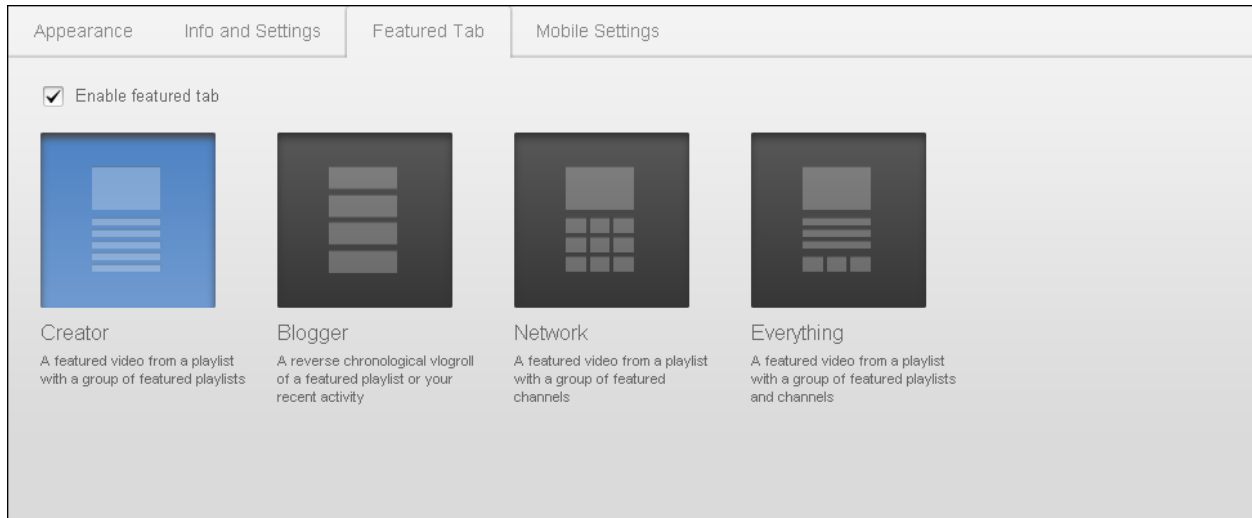
Info and Settings

Appearance		Info and Settings	Featured Tab	
Channel Information & Settings				
Title	<input type="text"/>		Default Tab	<input type="button" value="Feed Tab"/>
Description	<input type="text"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Always take subscribed users to the feed tab	
Tags	<input type="text"/>			
Visibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Make my channel visible on YouTube			
Appearance		Info and Settings	Featured Tab	Mobile Settings
Channel Information & Settings				
Title	<input type="text" value="Health & Human Services"/>		Default Tab	<input type="button" value="Featured Tab"/>
Description	<input type="text" value="The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the United States government's principal agency for protecting the health of all Americans and providing essential human services, especially for those who are least able to help themselves."/>		<input type="checkbox"/> Always take subscribed users to the feed tab	
Tags	<input type="text" value="Health human services disease prevention \"/>			
Visibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Make my channel visible on YouTube			
Advanced				
Redirect URL	<input type="text"/>		Learn more	
Conditional Redirections	<input type="text"/>		Learn more	
Tracking Image URL	<input type="text"/>		Learn more	
Google Analytics Account ID	<input type="text" value="UA-12842300-18"/>		Learn more	



Featured Tab

All channels have this feature.



I want a video posted on YouTube but don't need a channel

If you're doing a single video project that you don't think warrants creating a YouTube channel, you may be able to post your video(s) on the main [HHS YouTube Channel](#)⁹. However, it may be more appropriate for you to post in to another channel that is more directly relevant. For example, a small program within NIH that is not expecting to produce much video content may be able to post to the NIH OD YouTube Channel.

Use your organizational chart to determine the office most directly overseeing yours that does have a YouTube channel. Or [email the hhsCNM](#)¹⁰ and we can help connect you with the owner of a channel you specify.

Who oversees my YouTube Channel's Activities?

A YouTube Content Manager must be designated to oversee and ultimately be held responsible for all activities of the YouTube Channel.

The clearance process for posting YouTube videos is the same as that for other content for website publishing.

⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/user/USGOVHHS>

¹⁰ <mailto:newmedia@hhs.gov>

STANDARDS AND POLICIES

There are federal and HHS-level standards and policies that apply to the management of a YouTube Channel.

Video Requirements

Videos posted to HHS channels must serve the core communications mission of the posting Agency.

Video Accessibility (Section 508)

All videos posted on YouTube must meet HHS Section 508 requirements for accessibility. Under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, [videos and multimedia](#)¹¹ must be [captioned and audio-described](#)¹².

(c) Captioning


1. Captioning and audio descriptions are required to be provided when important-to-understand the audio or visual components of a video or multimedia production.
2. YouTube's media player allows for the use of closed-captioning – the ability for a user to select the captioning to be turned on ('opened') or not (left 'closed'). Therefore, a YouTube channel owner does not have to upload open captioned videos.

(d) Audio-Description

1. Only those visual portions that are necessary for the comprehension of the production's content need to be audio described.
2. Unlike YouTube's media player allowance for the inclusion of closed-captioning – the ability for a user to select the captioning to be turned on ('opened') or not (left 'closed'), it does not yet allow Audio-Description to be turned on or off at the user's discretion. Indeed, there is no media player yet that does offer this option for audio description. The YouTube channel owner will need to post two versions of each video – one with Audio-Description and one without Audio-Description, just as they will need to do on other third-party/social media sites and on their .gov site.

The YouTube platform itself is not Section 508 compliant. This is one of the reasons why all uploaded YouTube videos must also be embed on a dot.gov website.

All HHS video content on YouTube must be captioned.

For information on the captioning file types that are compatible with YouTube, see the [YouTube Help Center](#)¹³ .

Additional information on captioning is available at <http://www.hhs.gov/web/policies/webstandards/video508.html>.

¹¹ <http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.24.htm>


¹² <http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.24.htm#%28c%29>

¹³ <http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=100077>

508 Accommodation Waivers: Exceptions to the 508 requirement may be made in cases of engagement with citizen users. For example, when running a video campaign in which an agency is asking for users to upload content directly into a YouTube agency group, it would be unreasonable to expect or insist that all users caption their content.

The YouTube Content Manager must contact hhsCNM before uploading non-508 compliant video onto the agency's channel.

The sponsoring agency must demonstrate the ability to provide access to the video information if a visitor to your channel requests accommodation. WCD has a support contract in place for HHS agencies to use.

Note: Under no circumstances shall a non-captioned video be the [featured video](#)¹⁴  in your YouTube Channel.

All videos must appear on a .gov website

It's an [OMB requirement](#)¹⁵ that all information presented on a third-party website should also be available on a .gov website.

From OMB M-10-23:

“Agencies should also provide individuals with alternatives to third-party websites and applications. People should be able to obtain comparable information and services through an agency’s official website or other official means. “

All HHS videos posted on YouTube must also appear on an HHS.gov website. This requirement may or may not be fulfilled by embedding or linking the YouTube video itself onto that website.

A link must be provided in the video description linking to a .gov website where a user could reasonably find this video.

Embedding a YouTube Video

It is the default feature of YouTube to allow anyone to embed any video on a web page. The ability for others to embed your video on their websites is a key element in increasing viewership and increase the distribution of your message. You may also be interested in embedding videos (yours or other’s) onto your dot.gov website.

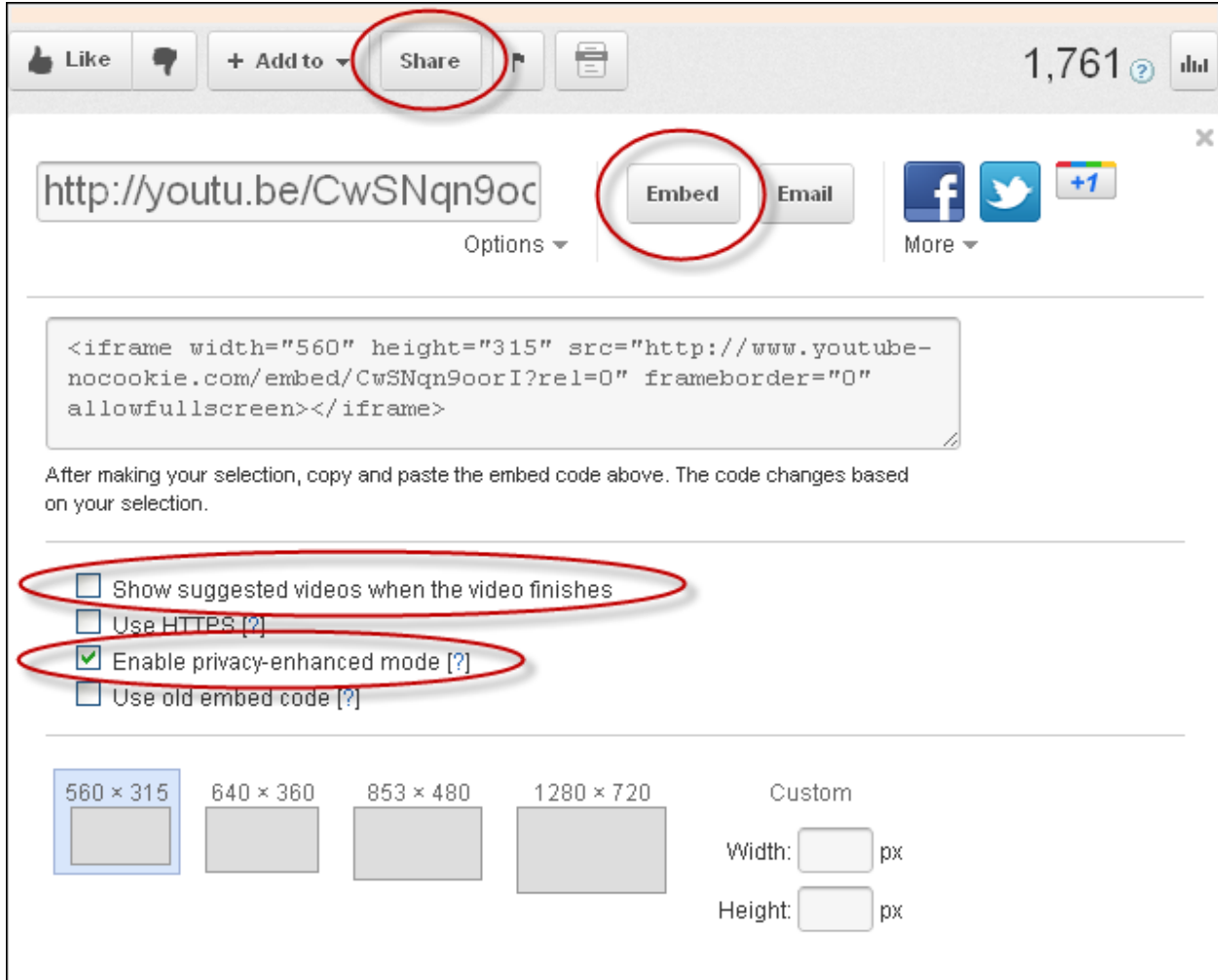
Getting the YouTube Embed Code

To get the YouTube embed code, complete the following steps:

- Ensure “Show suggested videos when the video finishes” is NOT checked (HHS policy)
- Ensure “Enable privacy-enhanced mode” is checked (OMB policy)

¹⁴ <http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/static.py?hl=en&topic=1735221&guide=1734705&page=guide.cs>

¹⁵ http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-23.pdf



The screenshot shows the YouTube video embed options interface. At the top, there are buttons for 'Like', '+ Add to', 'Share', and a printer icon. The video URL 'http://youtu.be/CwSNqn9oc' is displayed in a text box, with an 'Embed' button circled in red. Below the URL are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and a '+1' button. A code block contains the embed code: `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/CwSNqn9oorI?rel=0" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`. Below the code is a note: 'After making your selection, copy and paste the embed code above. The code changes based on your selection.' There are four checkboxes: 'Show suggested videos when the video finishes' (unchecked), 'Use HTTPS [?]' (unchecked), 'Enable privacy-enhanced mode [?]' (checked), and 'Use old embed code [?]' (unchecked). At the bottom, there are four size options: '560 x 315' (selected), '640 x 360', '853 x 480', and '1280 x 720', along with a 'Custom' option with width and height input fields.

Related Videos

Related videos appear within the embedded video player after the embedded video has finished playing. Related video lists are calculated by a Google algorithm that may tie associations between our videos and videos that we don't want to be associated with. Therefore, ensure "Show suggested videos when the video finishes" is not selected prior to obtaining the video embed code.

Privacy-enhanced mode

Default YouTube embed codes activate user-permanent cookies immediately upon landing on the page with the embedded video. Enabling [privacy-enhanced mode](http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=141046)¹⁶ prevents cookies from being set until the user clicks on the video to view it.

¹⁶ <http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=141046>

YouTube Logo and the Required Privacy Notice

When the "Privacy-enhanced mode" is enabled, embedding YouTube videos on .gov domains automatically replaces the YouTube logo that typically appears on the bottom right of videos with the text privacy info. This text links to the required YouTube privacy notice page.

Using the iframe embed code

As of January 2011, YouTube introduced a new default embed code, which uses what is called an "iframe." The iframe player will be automatically updated by YouTube to improve functionality and accessibility.

Videos embedded using the iframe embed code can be played using a Flash player or an HTML5 player. These videos can also be viewed on mobile devices such as smart phones or tablets.

Enhancing Player Accessibility (Section 508)

ASPA has worked with 508 specialists to develop a more 508 compliant iframe code. Follow these three steps to make your embedded video more accessible:

Step 1

Start with the iframe embed code generated by YouTube. The unique video identifier is highlighted below:

```
<iframe width="560" height="315" src="http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/FnsPOtRqz-c?rel=0&showinfo=0" frameborder="0"></iframe>
```

Step 2

Add a title tag and an alt tag to the embed code. Make the changes to the highlighted text based on the video title:

```
title="YouTube embedded video: Insert Title of Video Here" alt="YouTube embedded video: Insert Title of Video Here"
```

```
<iframe width="560" height="315" src="http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/FnsPOtRqz-c?rel=0&showinfo=0" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen title="YouTube embedded video: The Rocket Boys of NIH" alt="YouTube embedded video: The Rocket Boys of NIH">YouTube embedded video: http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/FnsPOtRqz-c</iframe>
```

Step 3

Add a description and the video URL that includes the unique video identifier: YouTube embedded video: <http://www.youtube-nocookie.com/embed/FnsPOtRqz-c>

If iframes, javascript, and Flash are not supported a description and link to the video on YouTube will appear on the page:

```
<iframe width="560" height="315" src="http://www.youtube-
nocookie.com/embed/FnsPOtRqz-c?rel=0&showinfo=0" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen
title="YouTube embedded video: The Rocket Boys of NIH" alt="YouTube embedded
video: The Rocket Boys of NIH">YouTube embedded video: http://www.youtube-
nocookie.com/embed/FnsPOtRqz-c</iframe>
```

Comment Moderation

Agencies have the option of allowing comments and video responses to YouTube videos. If comments or video responses are allowed, they must be moderated - reviewed and approved by agency staff.

By default, comments are made in threaded discussions under each video and within a channel as whole. There are three moderation settings for comments:

- Allow comments automatically. *Agencies must NOT select this setting.*
- Allow all comments with approval only. *This setting requires Agency management approval.*
- Don't allow comments. *Not encouraged, but sometimes necessary.*

Video responses are different than video comments and can also be posted to individual videos. There are three moderation settings for video responses:

- Yes, allow video responses to be added automatically. *Agencies must not select this setting.*
- Yes, allow responses after I approve them. *This setting requires agency management approval of comments.*
- No, don't allow video responses. *Not encouraged.*

All videos allowing comments must have the following (or the like) in the video description:

We accept comments in the spirit of our comment policy:
http://newmedia.hhs.gov/standards/comment_policy.html

HHS Privacy Policy
<http://www.hhs.gov/Privacy.html>

Engaging with others and others' video content on YouTube

Subscribing to other Channels

Subscribing to a channel allows you to be alerted when that channel is updated.


- An Agency has no control over who subscribes to its channel.
- An Agency may subscribe to any government-operated channel.
- Agency management must approve subscription to non-government channels.
- Agencies may not subscribe to political channels.

Friending other Channels

Becoming friends makes it easier to keep track of what your friends are favoriting, uploading, or rating, and makes it easier to share public or private videos. Because of the capabilities of subscriptions...

- Agency channels may not friend nor accept friend requests from non-government channels.


“Favoriting” videos

“Favoriting” videos¹⁷  allow for external video content to be brought into a channel.

- An Agency may favorite any government video.
- Agency management must approve favoriting non-governmental videos.
- Agencies may not favorite political videos.

Responding to Comments and other Engagement Issues

One powerful use of the YouTube platform can be the direct public communication with individuals. Before engaging directly with the public, see our HHS Guidance: [When and How to Engage over New Media Platforms \(PDF - 60KB\)](#)¹⁸.

Personal messages can be controlled by going to your [YouTube account's privacy page](#)¹⁹ . If this feature is used, the standards and policies surrounding the use of email between government and individuals apply.


¹⁷ <http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=95392>

¹⁸

http://newmedia.hhs.gov/resources/hhscnm_guidance_on_when_and_how_to_engage_over_new_media_platforms_05032010.pdf

¹⁹ <http://www.google.com/intl/en/policies/privacy/>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The [YouTube Help Center](#)²⁰  is a valuable resource that is searchable and easy to navigate. Every content manager should be familiar with this resource.

Metadata

Metadata is the videos title, tags, description and thumbnail. They are used to index the video for search. Metadata should be clear and to the point.

Title: keywords should come first and branding at the end

Tags: mix common and specific tags that describe the video content

Description: write the most compelling information first, including keywords and links

Thumbnail: use high-resolution, clear and action-based images

Distribute and post your content across channels. Utilize all available channels and media to share the video:

Email: Use e-mail notifications to let subscribers know when you've posted a new video

Blog Post/Article: If you post an article on the same topic, embed the video in the post

Twitter: Tweet, and share premade tweets for others to use


Facebook: Post the video and include a call to action

Embed: Place the video on your .gov homepage

YouTube Analytics

YouTube recently updated the metrics platform, known as "Insights" to "YouTube Analytics." It allows users to see:

- Views
- Demographics
- Playback locations
- Traffic sources
- Audience retention

Learn more about [YouTube Analytics](#)²¹ .

²⁰ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0z2i83fmMk&feature=channel_page

²¹ <http://support.google.com/youtube/bin/static.py?hl=en&page=guide.cs&guide=1714169>

HHS Resources

Technical and strategic training and brainstorming is available from the HHS Center for New Media.

There are a number of government groups available as well, including the [HHS-NewMedia ListServ²²](#), which is open to all individuals with an email address from the HHS family of agencies.

We are also growing an HHS group of individuals interested in online video, so let us know if you're interested in contributing to that community.

²² <https://list.nih.gov/cgi-bin/wa.exe?SUBED1=HHS-NEWMEDIA&A=1&X=6D10FA126AEF0E5972>