



The Joint Training Initiative

at

South Florida HIDTA

is hosting:

SPC St. Petersburg
College
CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY INNOVATION



SOCIAL MEDIA INVESTIGATIONS

Date: April 9, 2026 (Thursday) 8:30a.m.-5:00p.m. EST

Deadline Date to register online: March 2, 2026

This tuition-free, 8-hour Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training course will introduce law enforcement to how criminal organizations exploit social media, encrypted apps, and the darknet to distribute narcotics, promote counterfeit pharmaceuticals, and evade law enforcement. Students will learn how to identify coded language, emojis, hashtags, and online behaviors tied to drug activity, as well as the role of cryptocurrency in fueling anonymous transactions.

Drug traffickers have moved far beyond the streets; today's marketplace is online, and social media is at the center of it with platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, and Discord provide traffickers with global reach, anonymity, and access to younger audiences, making them powerful tools for drug sales and recruitment. By combining real-world case examples, investigative strategies, and legal considerations, this training equips officers, analysts, and investigators with practical tools to stay ahead of emerging digital drug trends and effectively disrupt online trafficking networks.

Course topics include:

- Social media platforms
- Dangers of online drug forums
- Open-source intelligence (OSINT) tools
- Developing investigative strategies
- Techniques to disrupt online trafficking
- Recognizing on-line coded language
- Cryptocurrency and darknet marketplaces
- Counterfeit pharmaceuticals
- Learn how to predict emerging drug trends
- Legal considerations for digital investigations

Instructor Ryan Armstrong is a retired Sergeant from the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office in Florida, where he served for more than 25 years, including over 13 years leading various narcotics units, including undercover operations, pharmaceutical diversion cases, interdiction efforts, and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) assignments. Throughout his career, Ryan gained extensive experience in high-risk decision making, complex investigations, and inter-agency collaboration at the local, state, and federal levels. His units were instrumental in dismantling trafficking operations, conducting undercover buys, and coordinating large-scale interdiction cases that targeted criminal organizations and drug networks. Ryan's career experience has provided him with the ability to prepare class participants to recognize emerging social media drug trends and apply effective investigative strategies into prosecutable cases. As the founder of Alpha Insight LLC, Ryan now provides investigative services, threat assessments, digital security consulting, and threat/risk assessments for individuals, organizations, and businesses across the United States. He has taught courses to include Current Drug Trends, Diversion investigations, and Digital Underground: How Social Media Fuels the Drug Trade. Ryan is currently a Florida board member for the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators (NADDI).

Provider: St. Petersburg College/Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training (MCFTF)/Florida National Guard Counterdrug Training Program

Tuition Free: However, travel costs are the responsibility of the parent agency.

Location: SFLHIDTA Weston Facility, 3200 Meridian Parkway, Suite 101, Weston, FL 33331

Register Online: http://cpsireg.spcollege.edu/og_register.aspx?26185 or scan the following QR code with your phone camera:



**Questions concerning registration please contact:
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