

# Abuse and Harassment

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## Overview

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### March 2024

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#### **You may not target others with abuse or harassment, or encourage other people to do so.**

X's mission is to give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information, as well as express their opinions and beliefs without barriers. Free expression is a human right – we believe that everyone has a voice, and the right to use it. Our role is to serve the public conversation, which requires representation of a diverse range of perspectives.

We recognize that if anyone, regardless of background, experiences harassment on X, it can jeopardize their ability to express themselves and cause harm. To facilitate healthy dialogue on the platform, and empower individuals to express diverse opinions and beliefs, we prohibit behavior and content that harasses, shames, or degrades others. In addition to posing risks to people's safety, these types of behavior may also lead to physical and emotional hardship for those affected.

## What is in violation of this policy?

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We prohibit behavior and content that harasses, shames, or degrades others, as defined below. Please note that, in order to help our teams understand the context, we sometimes need to hear directly from the person being targeted to ensure that we have the necessary information prior to taking appropriate and proportionate enforcement action.

## Targeted Harassment

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We prohibit the malicious, unreciprocated targeting (such as mentioning or tagging) of individual(s), particularly when shared to humiliate or degrade someone. This can mean:

- Sharing multiple Posts, over a short period of time, or continuously posting replies with malicious content, to target an individual. This includes accounts dedicated to harassing an individual or multiple individuals.
- Mentioning or tagging users with malicious content.

## **Violent Event Denial**

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We prohibit content that denies that mass murder or other mass casualty events took place, where we can verify that the event occurred, and when the content is shared with abusive context. This may include references to such an event as a “hoax” or claims that victims or survivors are fake or “actors.” It includes, but is not limited to, events like the Holocaust, school shootings, terrorist attacks, and natural disasters.

## **Incitement of Harassment**

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We prohibit behavior that encourages others to harass or target specific individuals or groups of people with abuse. This includes, but is not limited to: calls to target people with abuse or harassment online and behavior that urges offline action, such as physical harassment.

## **Unwanted Sexual Content & Graphic Objectification**

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While some [consensual nudity and adult content is permitted](#) on X, we prohibit unwanted sexual conduct and graphic objectification that sexually objectifies an individual without their consent. This includes, but is not limited to:

- sending someone unsolicited and/or unwanted adult media (images, videos, and GIFs)
- unwanted sexual discussion of someone’s body
- solicitation of sexual acts
- any other content that otherwise sexualizes an individual without their consent.

## **Insults**

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We take action against the use of insults or profanity to target others. However, while some individuals may find certain terms to be offensive, we will not take action against every instance where insulting terms are used.

## **Use of Prior Names and Pronouns**

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Where required by local laws, we will reduce the visibility of posts that purposefully use different pronouns to address someone other than what that person uses for themselves, or that use a previous name that someone no longer goes by as part of their transition. Given the complexity of

determining whether such a violation has occurred, we must always hear from the target to determine if a violation has occurred.

## **What is not in violation of this policy?**

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Some posts may appear to be harmful when viewed in isolation, but may not be when viewed in the context of a larger conversation. For example, friends may consensually use certain terms or phrases to engage with each other that could appear abusive without this context. We also recognise that our platform can be used to call attention to, condemn, or highlight others for harmful behaviors. In such cases, we do not take action where the context is clearly non-abusive and intended to counter these kinds of rhetoric.

We also believe that criticism of institutions, practices and ideas is a fundamental part of the freedom of expression and thus we will not take action on such critical commentary.

## **Who can report violations of this policy?**

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Anyone can report violations of this policy using our dedicated reporting flow. However, we sometimes need to hear directly from the person being targeted to ensure that we have the information needed prior to taking any enforcement action.

## **What happens if you violate this policy?**

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When determining the penalty for violating this policy, we consider a number of factors including, but not limited to the severity of the violation, whether someone has been targeted (such as being mentioned, referred to by full name, referenced with a photo, etc), and an individual's previous record of rule violations. The following is a list of potential enforcement options for content that violates this policy:

- Making content less visible on X by:
  - Removing the post from search results, in-product recommendations, trends, notifications, and home timelines
  - Restricting the post discoverability to the author's profile
  - Downranking the post in replies
  - Restricting likes, replies, reposts, quote, bookmarks, share, pin to profile, or engagement counts
  - Excluding the post from having ads adjacent to it
- Excluding posts and/or accounts in email or in-product recommendations.
- Requiring post removal.

For example, we may ask someone to remove the violating content and serve a period of time in read-only mode before they can post again. Subsequent violations may lead to account suspension.

- Suspending accounts whose sole purpose is to violate our Unwanted Sexual Content & Graphic Objectification policy, or accounts that are dedicated to harassing individuals.

To learn more, please see our [range of enforcement options](#), and if someone believes their account was enforced against in error, they can [submit an appeal](#).

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