the Internet, and some theories may even claim that debunking information is inaccurate. You should attempt to find high-quality, trustworthy sources to check accuracy and seek out the consensus of experts if you are unsure. Please research theories and claims to the extent the task time allows. If a theory/claim seems wildly improbable and can't be verified by independent trustworthy sources, you should consider it unsubstantiated.

4.5   Untrustworthy Webpages or Websites

The **Lowest** rating should be used for pages or websites you strongly suspect are engaging in deceptive or malicious practices.

Some untrustworthy pages are created to benefit the website or organization rather than helping people. Some untrustworthy pages may even exist to cause harm to people who engage with the page, such as scams or malicious downloads.

Your assessment of untrustworthiness may be based on the content of the page, information about the website, information about the content creator, and the reputation of the website or content creator.

Your assessment may also be based on a *lack* of critically important information. For example, any website involving financial transactions or sensitive information should have comprehensive information about who is responsible for the site and a way to contact the site if something goes wrong. If some aspect of a page or website makes you suspect deception or maliciousness, please look for information about the site. If you cannot find reputation information to confirm your suspicion, carefully explore the site.

Sometimes a single page on an unknown website in isolation may seem odd but subsequent exploration shows no concern. However, if you see a pattern of what appears to be deception or manipulation or become concerned about your own safety, please use the **Lowest** rating and leave the website immediately.

Pages with the following characteristics should be considered Untrustworthy:
- Inadequate information about the website or content creator for its purpose
- Lowest E-E-A-T or Lowest reputation
- Deceptive purpose, deceptive page design, or deceptive intent
- Deliberately obstructed or obscured MC
- Characteristics of scams, malicious downloads, or other harmful behavior
- Any webpage or website designed to manipulate people into actions that benefit the website or other organization while causing harm to self, others, or Specified Groups

Important: Highly untrustworthy pages should be given the **Lowest** rating even if you are unable to "prove" the webpage or site is harmful. Because many people are unwilling to use a highly untrustworthy page, an untrustworthy page or website fails to achieve its purpose.

4.5.1 Inadequate Information about the Website or Content Creator for the Purpose of the Page

For pages that require a high level of trust, information about who created the content and who is responsible for the content is critical.

As discussed in Section 2.5.3, we expect most websites to have some information about who (e.g., what individual, company, business, foundation, etc.) is responsible for the website and who created the MC and some contact information, unless there is a good reason for anonymity. As you will see in the examples below, many types of Lowest pages such as malicious downloads and scams typically have no information or fake information about who is responsible to prevent recourse by people who are harmed.

Any site that handles personal, private or sensitive data must provide extensive contact information. This includes sites that ask users to create passwords, share personal information, or conduct financial transactions.

YMYL pages or websites that handle sensitive data with absolutely no information about the website or content creator should be rated **Lowest**.