

Singapore passes online safety law with a commission and tort claims for victims

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Documents the source offers: [https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/files/](https://www.mlaw.gov.sg/files/Annex___Proposed_New_Law_to_Empower_Victims_of_Online_Harms_to_Seek_Timely_Relief_and_Obtain_Redress.pdf)

Annex___Proposed_New_Law_to_Empower_Victims_of_Online_Harms_to_Seek_Timely_Relief_and_Obtain_Redress.pdf

2 December 2025

On 5 November 2025, the Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Bill (" Bill ") was passed. It was tabled for first reading on 15 October 2025.

Introduced by the Ministry of Law (" MinLaw ") and the Ministry of Digital Development and Information (" MDDI "), the Bill sets out new measures to strengthen online safety and protect Singaporeans from online harms by empowering victims to seek timely relief and obtain redress. These measures complement existing regulatory and criminal law frameworks and are part of the Government's continued efforts to strengthen defences against online harms.

Key provisions

Establishment of new Online Safety Commission

The Bill will provide for the establishment of a new agency called the Online Safety Commission (" OSC "), which will provide remedies to victims who come forward to report the harm they have experienced. The OSC, which will be set up by the end of the first half of 2026, will be headed by a Commissioner appointed by the Minister for Digital Development and Information.

In most cases, victims will be required to first report the harm they have experienced to the online service provider before submitting a report to OSC. For specified categories of online harms that warrant urgent relief, such as intimate image abuse and child abuse material, victims may seek remedies from OSC immediately. It will be an offence for a complainant to submit false information to OSC.

Upon receiving a report from a victim, OSC will be empowered to issue directions to address the online harm. These include directions to take down the harmful content, restrict the perpetrator's online account, or allow the victim to post a reply. These directions may be issued to communicators of the harmful content, administrators of online locations, or platforms where the harmful content is hosted.

Non-compliance with directions will be made a criminal offence. In such cases, OSC may also take additional measures such as issuing an access blocking order or app removal order. Access blocking orders can only be issued to an internet access service provider; and app removal orders can only be issued to an app distribution service.

Affected parties may seek a reconsideration of a decision by OSC, and thereafter make an appeal to an independent appeal panel appointed by the Minister for Digital Development and Information. The appeal panel will comprise representatives from across various sectors with relevant domain knowledge.

OSC will address the following 13 categories of online harms. These categories will be implemented in phases, starting with the most serious and prevalent harms:

Categories of online harm to be implemented by the first half of 2026: Online harassment (including online sexual harassment); doxxing; online stalking; intimate image abuse; and image-based child abuse.

Categories of online harm to be progressively implemented: Online impersonation; inauthentic material abuse; online instigation of disproportionate harm; incitement of violence; incitement of enmity; publication of false material; publication of statement harmful to reputation; and non-consensual disclosure of private information.

Statutory torts

The Bill will introduce statutory torts to clarify the duties and liabilities of three key stakeholders in the online ecosystem:

Communicators: A person must not communicate, publish, and/or engage in any conduct relating to any specified online harm in Singapore.

Administrators: An administrator must not create, set up, or administer an online location in a manner that facilitates or permits the conduct of any online harm, intending or knowing that harm would occur. An administrator must also take reasonable measures to address specified online harms at their online location upon receiving notice of such harm.

Platforms: A platform must take reasonable measures to address specified online harms upon receiving notice of such harm. Certain platforms, such as those with greater reach, will be subject to additional requirements, for example, on the time taken to respond to user reports.

The statutory torts will provide victims with a clear cause of action against communicators, administrators, and platforms, and allow victims to seek redress from the court. The court will be able to grant remedies such as compensatory damages and injunctions.

The following nine categories of online harms will be covered under the statutory torts: online harassment (including online sexual harassment); doxxing; online stalking; intimate image abuse; image-based child abuse; online impersonation; inauthentic material abuse; online instigation of disproportionate harm; and incitement of violence.

Enhancing accountability of communicators of online harms

The Bill will introduce measures to ensure that communicators of online harms can be better identified and held accountable.

OSC can require platforms to provide identity information of end-users suspected of causing online harm, where such information is already in the platforms' possession. To remedy situations where bad actors deliberately withhold their identity information, certain platforms, such as those with greater reach, can also be asked to take further reasonable steps to collect additional identity information from communicators of online harms.

A victim who has submitted a report to OSC may apply for the disclosure of a perpetrator's identity information for specified purposes, such as bringing a claim under a statutory tort. Where such information is disclosed, conditions will be imposed to prevent misuse by the victim.

Background

The development of the Bill was guided by a Steering Committee comprising members from relevant government agencies, the non-profit sector, and academia. The Government also conducted a series of closed-door engagement sessions with stakeholders including industry partners, academics, community groups, and other experts. A public consultation on the proposed legislation and measures concluded on 22 December 2024 and received broad public support. The feedback gathered was taken into consideration in finalising the Bill.

Reference materials

The following materials are available on Singapore Statutes Online sso.agc.gov.sg , MinLaw website www.mlaw.gov.sg , and MDDI website www.mddi.gov.sg :

Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Bill

MinLaw press release: Proposed new law to empower victims of online harms to seek timely relief and obtain redress

Annex to MinLaw press release

Second reading opening speech by Minister for Digital Development and Information Josephine Teo

Second reading closing speech by Minister for Digital Development and Information Josephine Teo

Second reading opening speech by Minister of State for Digital Development and Information Rahayu Mahzam

Second reading closing speech by Minister of State for Digital Development and Information Rahayu Mahzam

Second reading speech by Minister for Law Edwin Tong SC