

New Online Safety Code of Practice for App Distribution Services Enhances Protection for Singapore Users

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- 📄 Code of Practice requires designated app distribution services to minimise risk of exposure to harmful content for users, especially children
- 📄 New age assurance measures and enhanced protection for children

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1. The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) has issued a Code of Practice for Online Safety for App Distribution Services¹ (ADSs) (the “Code”), which takes effect from 31 March 2025. The Code requires designated ADSs to put in place system-level measures to curtail the risk of exposure to harmful content for users, especially children who are particularly vulnerable when exposed to inappropriate content online.

2. The Government has been taking steps to minimise Singapore users’ exposure to harmful content online. Social media services were the first type of Online Communication Services specified under the Broadcasting Act, allowing us to issue directions to social media services to disable access by Singapore users to egregious content found on their services. To ensure that social media platforms put in place system-level measures to enhance online safety, IMDA issued a Code of Practice for Online Safety in July 2023, requiring designated social media services² to minimise users’ access to harmful content, provide users with effective and easy-to-use reporting, and be accountable to their users by providing transparency on their measures and levels of safety in their online



safety reports which have to be submitted to IMDA annually for compliance assessment.

New Code of Practice to enhance protection for app users

3. We recognise that ADSs are key gateways to accessing apps on our digital devices and are market-places for online content including online games. With more people including children owning mobile devices, and therefore accessing ADSs to download apps easily, there is an increased risk of exposure to harmful content, including age-inappropriate content for children. As a next step to enhancing online safety for Singapore users, we have included ADSs as another type of Online Communication Services under the Broadcasting Act for regulation, which will allow IMDA to direct ADSs to disable access by Singapore users to egregious content on their services.

4. Under the Code, IMDA will require designated ADSs with significant reach or impact, namely Apple App Store, Google Play Store, Huawei App Gallery, Microsoft Store and Samsung Galaxy Store, to put in place system-level measures to curtail the risk of exposure to harmful content for users, especially children.

Age assurance measures to better protect children

5. As children are particularly vulnerable when exposed to harmful and age-inappropriate content online, we will require designated ADSs to put in place age assurance measures to determine whether the users on their platforms are children and ensure better protection for them. Singapore is an early mover in mandating age assurance measures for ADSs, including restricting children from accessing and downloading age-inappropriate apps based on age ratings set by the designated ADSs. Before the launch of the Code, IMDA had conducted a public consultation in October 2024, where ADSs were also welcome to provide their feedback. Over the next few months, IMDA will continue to engage designated ADSs on the implementation of age assurance measures. The designated ADSs will have to submit an implementation plan to IMDA.

6. Tackling the threat of harmful online content is a global issue which requires a whole-of-society effort. We will continue our efforts in working with relevant government agencies, the industry and community to ensure that regulatory and public education measures are put in place to address the growing range of harmful online content and protect Singapore users against online harms.

[Factsheet on Age Assurance \(158.94KB\)](#) 

Footnotes

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About Infocomm Media Development Authority

The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) leads Singapore's digital transformation by developing a vibrant digital economy and an inclusive digital society. As Architects of Singapore's Digital Future, we foster growth in Infocomm Technology and Media sectors in concert with progressive regulations, harnessing frontier technologies, and developing local talent and digital infrastructure ecosystems to establish Singapore as a digital metropolis.

For more news and information, visit www.imda.gov.sg or follow IMDA on LinkedIn (IMDASg) and Instagram (@imdasg).

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