

Public suggestions to Meta / Facebook (I am happy for these comments to be published publicly)

Over the past year since early 2025, there have been troubling reports of people being falsely banned by Meta / Facebook, which has been reported in the news. Some examples include:

- Los Angeles News:

<https://abc7.com/post/facebook-instagram-users-us-say-meta-wrongly-suspended-accounts/17281042/>

- Sky News Australia:

<https://www.skynews.com.au/business/tech-and-innovation/meta-falsely-accuses-gold-coast-business-owner-of-child-exploitation-and-suspends-her-accounts-after-she-posted-a-video-of-her-dogs/news-story/1156214faecd8266afe6661638fa46f2>

- Boston 25:

<https://www.boston25news.com/news/local/more-than-devastating-locked-out-meta-users-accused-vicious-act/VQTGS33ARZBLRKTWMNREH53F7I/>

There is also a petition online with over 56,000 signatures reporting false and wrongful bans <https://www.change.org/p/meta-wrongfully-disabling-accounts-with-no-human-customer-support>

Here are my suggestions for the Facebook Oversight Board to ensure better due process and fairness for banned users:

- Facebook should not have a one-strike permanent ban (or permanent ban without warnings), there should be at least a 3-strike system (3 warnings given in advance) before a permanent ban as the 4th strike
- To ensure due process and fairness, there should be some specific evidence given by Meta to justify any bans instead of baseless accusations (For example if I am banned for "violating community guidelines", it should be clearly stated specifically where the violation was e.g. my comment on this date to this person was deemed to be full of vulgarities and profanity etc)
- Permanent bans should not be automated by a computer system / AI but should have at least 2 - 3 human operators
- Liking or interacting profile feed content on Facebook (that is later apparently deemed by Facebook to be objectionable) should not be a reason for a permanent ban, because how on earth is a user supposed to know what is "objectionable" or not if it appeared on the platform in the first place? In these cases, a 30 or 60 day suspension would be more appropriate

- In all permanent ban cases, there should be an effective way to appeal a few times (instead of the zero appeal / 1 appeal that is apparently automated and usually rejected)
- The current system doubly and unfairly penalizes users who linked their Facebook and Instagram accounts. When one of these accounts gets a guideline violation and a penalty, the other linked account also gets the penalty even though there is no guideline violation. This is extremely unfair and only one of these accounts should get the penalty (the account which had the recorded guideline violation)
- The current system penalizes both linked accounts, yet maintains an appeal channel for only one of these accounts with zero appeal channel for other account. For linked accounts (Facebook and Instagram accounts are linked) that get penalized, there should always be multiple appeal channels available (e.g. ways to appeal via Facebook or Instagram should be made available, instead of requiring users to log in)
- For permanent ban cases, a promise to not commit future rule breaking should be a valid reason for the account to be reinstated. It is not fair to penalize someone forever without giving them a chance to repent.

With regards to fair industry practices

- For some technology companies, more serious penalties (e.g. permanent ban) are almost always preceded by warnings and suspensions, which emphasize what behaviour is unacceptable according to the Terms of Use, and more importantly, gives the person chances to repent. In contrast, Meta / Instagram / Facebook appears to be giving out bans almost instantly with no prior warning, which is incredibly unfair, grossly out of proportion especially to first-time rule breakers, and undermines public trust in Meta. As a result of these heavy-handed practices by Meta to ban permanently with no warnings or suspensions, Meta's reputation is declining, and I urge Meta to quickly change.

With regards to false bans

- Given that there have been many reports of automated permanent and wrongful bans, I believe Meta should have a mass un-banning of accounts, or change that to suspensions (e.g. 30-60 days suspensions) as a cool-down / redemption period starting now, with future notice that there may be bans in the future if there are still community guideline violations beyond the redemption period.

Meta / Facebook has been a tech giant since 2008, but its reputation has declined dramatically in the past year with wrongful permanent bans which are extremely unfair to users, with no way to appeal, which is frankly as authoritarian and unfair as it can get for the users who received these wrong penalties.

I sincerely hope that Meta will stop using permanent bans, use more suspensions instead, and to always leave appeal and communication channels open in any circumstances.