

## Ensuring User Safety & Protection

User safety is paramount for dating and social discovery services, and both providers and users play a role in creating a secure environment.

By implementing these practices, dating services can foster a secure and positive environment, enhancing user trust and confidence.

### Key Legislation:

- Communications Decency Act (USA)
- Online Safety Act (UK)
- Digital Services Act (EU)
- Online Safety Act (Australia)

### Profile Safety:

- Services should actively moderate profiles to block fakes and inappropriate content.
- If utilised, user identity verification should be transparent and user-friendly.
- Members should have clear policies on acceptable profile content and identity issues
- Services should not themselves create fake profiles unless expressly for the testing of proper function of the platform and never for commercial gain e.g. inducing users to subscribe to the service.

### Age Verification:

- Services should not accept registrations from those under the age of 18.
- Services should consider age-assurance appropriate to the risk of children accessing their platform. Reference the [ICO guidance](#) for further reading.
- Services should comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements for age assurance

### Behaviour Management:

- Services should define acceptable behaviour guidelines for users through Terms and Conditions and/or Community Guidelines.
- Encourage users to report abuse and provide easily accessible tools to block unwanted interactions.
- Filter tools for contact control and responsive handling of reports.

### Safety Advice:

- Offer comprehensive safety guidance for online and offline interactions.
- Cover privacy protection, fraud prevention, and personal safety.
- Promote awareness without causing alarm.

### Tailored Safety Approach:

- Customise advice to service nature, whether casual meet-ups or serious relationships.
- Respond to new risks as they become apparent.

**Fraud Prevention:**

- Employ tools and processes to identify and remove scammers.
- Highlight risks of moving conversations away from secure in-service channels.
- Provide reporting channels and prompt response to user concerns.

**Victim Support:**

- Advise victims of scams to report to relevant law enforcement agencies.
- Offer clear signposting to support bodies and law enforcement agencies.

**Law Enforcement Cooperation:**

- Cooperate with law enforcement agencies and follow proper procedures.
- Engage with law enforcement around intelligence and partnership working.