

FACEBOOK

European Commission
Didier Reynders, Commissioner for Justice and Consumers
Rue de la Loi, 200
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Menlo Park, 28 April 2020

Re: Ares (2020) 2392056 s

Dear Commissioner Reynders,

Thank you for your letter of 21 April 2020 on the efforts undertaken to fight against rogue trading practices related to the COVID-19 crisis.

As mentioned in our previous correspondence of 27 March, Facebook has been putting in place a variety of measures to combat deceptive and exploitative conduct on our platform during the COVID-19 pandemic.

One of the most wide-ranging steps we have taken in this respect was to update our policies prohibiting exploitative or deceptive advertisements and sales of healthcare products and services to cover COVID-19-related content. We targeted the initial ad and sales ban to medical face masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes and COVID-19 test kits. Since then, we have extended the ban on ads and sales to UV sterilizers and oximeters, on the condition that ads and product descriptions for these two products mention COVID-19 and include a sense of urgency or a guarantee of prevention. We have been applying these measures across our services from advertising to organic content on Facebook, Marketplace and Instagram for over a month now.

In addition, we've been working to connect people to accurate information from health experts and have been taking steps to prevent misinformation and harmful content about COVID-19 from spreading on our apps. In terms of the former, we've now directed over 2 billion people to resources from the WHO and other health authorities through our COVID-19 Information Center and pop-ups on Facebook and Instagram with over 350 million people clicking through to learn more. In terms of the latter, we've expanded our third-party fact checking program and, during the month of May, we were able to display warnings on about 40 million posts on Facebook, based on around 4,000 articles by our independent fact-checking partners. When people saw those warning labels, 95% of the time they did not go on to view the original content. To date, we've also removed hundreds of thousands of pieces of misinformation that could lead to imminent physical harm.

We trust that this information is of assistance. To the extent that you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Monika Bickert
Vice President Public Policy

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Menlo Park, CA