

**Case Number and Summary:  
2021-008-FB-FBR  
Case referred by Facebook**

Submit public comment [here](#).

*In March 2021, the Facebook page of a state-level medical authority in Brazil posted a picture of a written notice with messaging on measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19. The notice claims that lockdowns are ineffective, against the fundamental rights of the Constitution and condemned by the World Health Organization (WHO). It includes an alleged quote from Dr. David Nabarro of the WHO stating that “the lockdown does not save lives and makes poor people much poorer.” The notice also claims the Brazilian state of Amazonas had an increase in the numbers of deaths and hospital admissions after lockdown, evidence of the failure of lockdown restrictions. The notice claims that lockdowns would lead to an increase in mental disorders, alcohol and drug abuse, and economic damage, among other things. It concludes that effective preventative measures against COVID-19 include education campaigns about hygiene measures, the use of masks, social distancing, vaccination and extensive monitoring by the government – but never the decision to adopt lockdowns.*

*The content was viewed around 32,000 times and shared over 270 times. No users reported the content. Facebook took no action against the content and referred the case to the Board. The content remains on the platform.*

*In its referral to the Board, Facebook said that the case is “difficult because this content does not violate Facebook’s policies, but can still be read by some people as advocacy for taking certain safety measures during the pandemic.” It states that under its Misinformation and Harm policy, it removes content containing misinformation “when public health authorities conclude that the information is false and likely to contribute to imminent violence or physical harm.” Facebook says that “this content does not meet that standard. While the World Health Organization and other health experts have advised Facebook to remove claims advocating against specific health practices, such as social distancing, they have not advised Facebook to remove claims advocating against lockdowns.”*

*The Board would appreciate public comments that address:*

- *Whether Facebook’s decision to take no action against the content was consistent with its Community Standards and other policies, including the*

*Misinformation and Harm policy (which sits within the rules on [Violence and Incitement](#)).*

- *Whether Facebook’s decision to take no action is consistent with the company’s stated values and human rights commitments.*
- *Whether, in this case, Facebook should have considered alternative enforcement measures to removing the content (e.g., the [False News Community Standard](#) places an emphasis on “reduce” and “inform,” including: labelling, downranking, providing additional context etc.), and what principles should inform the application of these measures.*
- *How Facebook should treat content posted by the official accounts of national or sub-national level public health authorities, including where it may diverge from official guidance from international health organizations.*
- *Insights on the post’s claims and their potential impact in the context of Brazil, including on national efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19.*
- *Whether Facebook should create a new Community Standard on health misinformation, as recommended by the Oversight Board in case decision [2020-006-FB-FBR](#).*

*In its decisions, the Board can issue policy recommendations to Facebook. While recommendations are not binding, Facebook must respond to them within 30 days. As such, the Board welcomes public comments proposing recommendations that are relevant to this case.*

## **Public comments**

If you or your organization feel that you can contribute valuable perspectives that can help with reaching a decision on the case announced today, you can submit your contributions using the link above. The public comment window for this case is open for 14 days, closing at 15:00 UTC on Wednesday, June 16, 2021.

## **What’s next**

In the coming weeks, Board Members will be deliberating this case. Once they have reached their final decision, we will post it on the Oversight Board [website](#).