

Oversight Board Selects a PAO on Sharing Residential Information

UPDATED

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Today, the [Oversight Board selected a case](#) referred by Facebook that is a policy advisory opinion regarding how we handle the sharing of private residential information.

Facebook does not allow users to post certain private information, including information on residential addresses, which violates [our policy on Privacy Violations and Image Privacy Rights](#) as laid out in our Community Standards. Facebook has requested guidance on this policy from the board because we found it [significant and difficult](#) as it creates tension between [our values of voice and safety](#). Access to residential addresses can be an important tool for journalism, civic activism, and other public discourse. However, exposing this information without consent can also create a risk to an individual's safety and infringe on privacy.

In this policy advisory opinion referral, Facebook is asking for guidance on the following questions:

- What information sources should render private information “publicly available”? (for instance, should we factor into our decision whether an image of a residence was already published by another publication?)
- What information sources should render private information “publicly available”? (for instance, should we factor into our decision whether an image of a residence was already published by another publication?)
- Should sources be excluded when they are not easily accessible or trustworthy (such as data aggregator websites, the dark web, or public records that cannot be digitally accessed from a remote location)?
- If some sources should be excluded, how should Facebook determine the type of sources that won't be considered in making private information “publicly available”?

- If an individual's private information is simultaneously posted to multiple places, including Facebook, should Facebook continue to treat it as private information or treat it as publicly available information?
- Should Facebook remove personal information despite its public availability, for example in news media, government records, or the dark web? That is, does the availability on Facebook of publicly available but personal information create a heightened safety risk that compels Facebook to remove the information, which may include removing news articles that publish such information or individual posts of publicly available government records?

Once the board has finished deliberating, we will consider and publicly respond to its recommendations within 30 days, and will update this post accordingly. Please see the [board's website](#) for the recommendations when they issue them.