



India Monthly Report under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2022

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Scope

The following report is published in accordance with Rule 4(1)(d) of the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021. This report contains information on actions taken by WhatsApp in response to:

- Grievances received from users in India via the grievance mechanisms of WhatsApp described below.
- Accounts actioned in India through our prevention and detection methods for violating the laws of India or [WhatsApp's Terms of Service](#).

Report Timeline

This report captures information for the period from 1 February, 2022 to 28 February, 2022.

We expect to publish subsequent editions of the report 30 days after the reporting period to allow sufficient time for data collection and validation.

Staying Safe on WhatsApp

WhatsApp was built for private messaging and people most often use WhatsApp to communicate with people they already know. It's a place where people chat with their close friends and family, and also a place where people can communicate privately with a business or speak confidentially with a doctor. Some of our users' most personal moments are shared on WhatsApp, which is why we use end-to-end encryption, so only the sender and recipient can see the contents of messages.

We are an industry leader among end-to-end encrypted messaging services in preventing and combating abuse. In addition to our safety features and controls, we employ a team of engineers, data scientists, analysts, researchers, and experts in law enforcement, online safety, and technology developments to oversee these efforts. We enable users to block contacts and to report problematic content and contacts to us from inside the app. We pay close attention to user feedback and engage with specialists in stemming misinformation, promoting cybersecurity, and preserving election integrity.

You can read more about WhatsApp's efforts in India at [this link](#).

Grievances from users in India

This part of the report captures grievances from users in India received via two methods:

- E-mails sent to grievance_officer_wa@support.whatsapp.com regarding violations of WhatsApp's Terms of Service, or questions about accounts on WhatsApp, published in the [Help Center](#).
- Mails sent to the India Grievance Officer via post.

Information on how to contact the Grievance Officer and WhatsApp in India is available on our website and can be found at [this link](#).

In the table below we report on the total number of reports that we received through the above mentioned channels and how many accounts did we take remedial action based on the report.

1. 'Accounts Actioned' denotes reports where we took remedial action based on the report. Taking action denotes either banning an account or a previously banned account being restored as a result of the complaint.
2. Reports may have been reviewed but not included as 'Actioned' for several reasons, including -
 - o The user requires assistance from us to access their account.
 - o The user requires assistance to use one of our features.
 - o The user is writing to us to provide feedback regarding our service.
 - o The user requests restoration of a banned account and the request is denied.
 - o The reported account does not violate the laws of India or our Terms of Service.

Table 1: Grievances received by the topic of the complaint (1 February, 2022-28 February, 2022)

Topic	Reports Received	Accounts Actioned
Account support	92	NA
Ban appeal	194	19
Other support	17	2
Product support	17	NA
Safety	15	NA
Total	335	21

Note:

- 'Other' support pertains to requests which are not consistently classifiable.
- Safety related grievances pertain to issues that may be about abuse or harmful behaviour on the platform. For such grievances, we respond to the user guiding them to report the complaint via [in-app reporting](#). This allows WhatsApp to receive the most recent messages sent to the complainant by the reported user or group, as well as information on the complainant's recent interactions with the reported user. As per our processes, this is not recorded as an action taken against the grievance report.
- We respond to all grievances received except in cases where a grievance is deemed to be a duplicate of a previous ticket. An account is 'actioned' when an account is banned or a previously banned account is restored, as a result of a complaint.
- 'N/A' denotes grievance topics where it's generally not applicable to action an account. In some rare cases, tickets may be later reassigned to another topic, and an action could arise from the re-assignment. Where applicable we will include these in the total.

How WhatsApp Tackles Abuse

In addition to responding to and actioning on user complaints through the grievance channel, WhatsApp also deploys tools and resources to prevent harmful behavior on the platform. We are particularly focused on prevention because we believe it is much better to stop harmful activity from happening in the first place than to detect it after harm has occurred.

The abuse detection operates at three stages of an account’s lifestyle: at registration, during messaging, and in response to negative feedback, which we receive in the form of user reports and blocks. A team of analysts augments these systems to evaluate edge cases and help improve our effectiveness over time. We have detailed our on-platform capabilities to identify and ban accounts in this [white paper](#).

The data shared below highlights the number of Indian accounts banned by WhatsApp between 1 February, 2022-28 February, 2022 using the aforementioned abuse detection approach, which also includes action taken in furtherance to negative feedback received from users via our “[Report](#)” feature.

We will continue to bring more transparency to our work and include more information about our efforts in future reports.

Table 2: Indian accounts banned on WhatsApp (1 February, 2022-28 February, 2022)

Accounts Banned
1,426,000

Note:

- An Indian account is identified via a +91 phone number.