

eSafety Commissioner
Mandatory Age Verification Regime
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Sex Work Law Reform Victoria submission to the development of a Mandatory Age Verification Regime

Sex Work Law Reform Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation lobbying for the legal rights of sex workers in Victoria. Victorian sex workers increasingly perform in, create and rely on pornography to assist their in-person sex work businesses.

Sex Work Law Reform Victoria's position is that:

- Australia should not follow the UK model of age verification established by the Digital Economy Act 2017 (UK).
- The implementation of a mandatory age verification regime should be postponed until the review of Australia's classification guidelines and current adult media laws is completed.

Unfinished Review of Classification Guidelines

In December 2019, the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts commenced a Review of Australian classification regulation in order to develop a classification framework that meets community needs and reflects the current digital environment¹. Despite publishing submissions, the review is yet to publish a final report, produce recommendations or implement any reforms to Australia's outdated classification regulation. Content regulation dictates which types of pornography fall into various classification categories, including 'refused classification'. As classification

¹ <https://www.communications.gov.au/have-your-say/review-australian-classification-regulation>

guidelines significantly impact how internet and social media content is regulated, we strongly suggest pausing the development of a Mandatory Age Verification Regime until the classification guidelines process has been completed.

Position On Age Verification

Sex Work Law Reform Victoria does not support minors having access to adults-only content. We do not oppose Internet Service Providers providing stronger parental controls for households, allowing filtering on an 'opt-in' basis.

Opposition to UK Model

Under the United Kingdom's Digital Economy Act 2017, adult content producers are required by law to implement strict age-verification controls on their websites or risk fines as well as Internet Service Provider level blocks. The implementation of a similar model in Australia would be expensive and unjustifiably infringe on the personal freedoms of internet users in Australia.

Yours sincerely

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