



PayPal Backtracks on Threat to Fine Users for Promoting “Misinformation”

PayPal threatened to fine users \$2,500 if they promoted “misinformation” or “intolerance” — then beat a hasty retreat after the threat drew backlash, claiming it had been announced “in error.”

The [Daily Wire](#) broke the story Friday, reporting:

The financial services company, which has repeatedly deplatformed organizations and individual commentators for their political views, will expand its “existing list of prohibited activities” on November 3. Among the changes are prohibitions on “the sending, posting, or publication of any messages, content, or materials” that “promote misinformation” or “present a risk to user safety or wellbeing.” Users are also barred from “the promotion of hate, violence, racial or other forms of intolerance that is discriminatory.”

... Deliberations will be made at the “sole discretion” of PayPal and may subject the user to “damages” — including the removal of \$2,500 “debited directly from your PayPal account” per offense. The company’s user agreement contains a provision in which account holders acknowledge that the figure is “presently a reasonable minimum estimate of PayPal’s actual damages” due to the administrative cost of tracking violations and damage to the company’s reputation.



As anyone who hasn’t been living under a rock the past few years knows, bans on “misinformation” or “the promotion of hate ... or other forms of intolerance,” especially when imposed by unabashedly woke companies such as PayPal, are applied almost exclusively to those who question or criticize the



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on October 11, 2022

prevailing progressive worldview. Think of all the people who were banned for posting “misinformation” about Covid-19 or of those whose posts on the Hunter Biden laptop story were “fact-checked” or deleted — never mind that many of these posts later turned out to be accurate. Recently, PayPal canceled accounts linked to *Spectator* associate editor Toby Young, a strong free-speech advocate, [restoring](#) them only after intense criticism. In addition, “PayPal has also sanctioned Gays Against Groomers, a group that opposes the sexualization of children, as well as evolutionary biologist Colin Wright and journalist Ian Miles Cheong,” noted the Daily Wire.

“Whatever PayPal’s intentions may be, censorship and chilling free speech is precisely the effect of these kinds of vaguely worded policies,” Jeremy Tedesco, vice president of corporate engagement at the Alliance Defending Freedom, told the Daily Wire. “We’ve seen social media companies use similar policies to stifle free speech on their platforms. We can expect a similar outcome with PayPal.”

That might well have been the case had the company’s policy change not been exposed. Once the story began racing through cyberspace, though, critics quickly pounced.

“It’s hard for me to openly criticize a company I used to love and gave so much to. But PayPal’s new AUP [Acceptable Use Policy] goes against everything I believe in,” tweeted former PayPal president [David Marcus](#). “A private company now gets to decide to take your money if you say something they disagree with. Insanity.”

“Agreed,” replied [Elon Musk](#), cofounder of an online payment processor that, combined with another platform, ultimately became PayPal.

“PayPal freezing funds for thought crimes is despicable,” tweeted Bitcoin guru [Dan Held](#), adding the hashtag “#DeletePayPal” — advice that a number of people, including conservative commentator [Candace Owens](#), heeded.

By Saturday, PayPal had had enough. A company spokesperson told the [Daily Wire](#), “An AUP notice recently went out in error that included incorrect information. PayPal is not fining people for misinformation and this language was never intended to be inserted in our policy. We’re sorry for the confusion this has caused.”

Somebody at PayPal, however, must have been considering imposing such a policy, or the “incorrect information” would never have existed in the first place. Was a discarded draft released to the public inadvertently? Did a rogue employee decide to insert the language? Or was PayPal hoping to put one over on its users under the assumption that no one actually reads such policies?

Actor Kevin Sorbo has his theory. “PayPal isn’t sorry, they’re just mad they got caught,” he [tweeted](#) Sunday.

Others, such as Christina Pushaw, spokeswoman for Florida Governor Ron DeSantis’ reelection campaign, took PayPal at its word, albeit in a tongue-in-cheek fashion.

“Well, well... looks like PayPal spread misinformation about itself,” Pushaw [quipped](#) on Twitter. “Maybe they should pay a \$2,500 fine to all of us?”



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