

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is POFMA?

- The Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (“**POFMA**”) was enacted to stem the spread of online falsehoods, and protect society against falsehoods that affect the public interest. It puts in place calibrated measures to counteract the impact of such communication, and to prevent misuse of online accounts and bots.
- POFMA may be used if (i) there is a false statement of fact communicated in Singapore and (ii) it is in the public interest to do so.

2. When did POFMA come into force?

- POFMA came into force on 2 Oct 2019. Details of the provisions of the Act are available on the [Singapore Statutes Online](#).

3. What is a Correction Direction?

- A Correction Direction is a Direction issued to the person (i.e. the recipient) who communicated the falsehood. It requires the recipient to publish a correction notice, providing access to the correct facts. This is so that people who see the falsehood also see the correction notice. The Correction Direction does not require the recipient to take down his/her post or the falsehood, and does not impose criminal sanctions if the Direction is complied with.

4. What is a Targeted Correction Direction?

- A Targeted Correction Direction is a Direction issued to an Internet Intermediary, whose service was used to communicate the falsehood. The Direction requires the Internet Intermediary to communicate a correction notice by means of its service to all users in Singapore who access the falsehood through its service. This is so that users who see the falsehood on a platform also see the correction notice on that platform.

5. How do these Corrections look like and what forms do they take?

- The format of the correction notice will vary across platforms, based on the platform’s characteristics and features.

6. What should a recipient do if he/she receives a Direction?

- The recipient is required to comply with the requirements as indicated in the Direction and within the specified time.

7. If the recipient wishes to appeal the Direction, what can he/she do?

- The recipient must first [apply to the Minister](#) for a variation or cancellation of the Direction. If the application is refused, he can then file an [appeal with the High Court](#). The recipient is still required to comply with the Direction even while his application to the Minister or appeal to the High Court is pending.

8. What will happen if someone shares a falsehood?

- If someone unknowingly shares a falsehood, they may be asked to carry a correction if public interest is involved. Criminal prosecution will be reserved for malicious actors who intentionally create or spread falsehoods, knowing that it can harm society.

9. Should members of public contact POFMA Office when they spot a falsehood?

- Suspected falsehoods can be reported to info@pofmaoffice.gov.sg.

10. What are the Codes of Practice?

- The Codes of Practice (COPs) outline measures that prescribed intermediaries are required to implement, so as to prevent and counter the misuse of online accounts by malicious actors, enhance the transparency of political advertising, and de-prioritise online falsehoods. They will be regularly reviewed, in consultation with the intermediaries, to ensure that they keep pace with new developments and remain appropriate and effective.
 - i. The COP for **Preventing and Countering Abuse of Online Accounts** requires prescribed Internet Intermediaries to put in place measures to prevent and counter the abuse of online accounts, such as account verification measures and bot disclosure requirements.
 - ii. The COP for **Transparency of Online Political Advertisements** requires prescribed Digital Advertising Intermediaries and Internet Intermediaries to put in place measures to ensure the transparency of online political advertisements that are directed towards a political end. This includes those that seek to promote the interests of a political party, or to influence public opinion on a matter of public interest or public controversy in Singapore. Public service announcements from Government Ministries, Statutory Boards and Organs of State to publicise or disseminate information on national policies, projects, and/or institutions, such as water conservation and public health do not constitute political advertisements. In this regard, information regarding national policy announcements at events such as the National Day Rally and Budget also do not constitute political advertisements.

iii. The COP for **Giving Prominence to Credible Online Sources of Information** requires prescribed Internet Intermediaries to give prominence to credible sources of information and/or de-prioritise online falsehoods.

- For more information on the COPs, please visit [here](#).

11. Which are the prescribed internet and digital advertising intermediaries?

- Information on the prescribed Internet Intermediaries and Digital Advertising Intermediaries can be found [here](#).

12. What are Declared Online Locations?

- An online location can be declared as a Declared Online Location if it has carried three or more different online falsehoods, which are the subject of active Directions issued within a period of 6 months prior to the Declaration.
- The POFMA Office website contains a [registry](#) which allows Digital Advertising Intermediaries and Service Providers to be aware of the list of Declared Online Locations.
- The public is advised to exercise caution and do additional fact-checking, if accessing these online locations for information.