



Online Safety Act 2023

2023 CHAPTER 50

PART 1 **U.K.**

INTRODUCTION

1 Introduction **U.K.**

- (1) This Act provides for a new regulatory framework which has the general purpose of making the use of internet services regulated by this Act safer for individuals in the United Kingdom.
- (2) To achieve that purpose, this Act (among other things)—
 - (a) imposes duties which, in broad terms, require providers of services regulated by this Act to identify, mitigate and manage the risks of harm (including risks which particularly affect individuals with a certain characteristic) from—
 - (i) illegal content and activity, and
 - (ii) content and activity that is harmful to children, and
 - (b) confers new functions and powers on the regulator, OFCOM.
- (3) Duties imposed on providers by this Act seek to secure (among other things) that services regulated by this Act are—
 - (a) safe by design, and
 - (b) designed and operated in such a way that—
 - (i) a higher standard of protection is provided for children than for adults,
 - (ii) users' rights to freedom of expression and privacy are protected, and
 - (iii) transparency and accountability are provided in relation to those services.

Commencement Information

- II** S. 1 in force at Royal Assent, see [s. 240\(4\)\(a\)](#)

Changes to legislation: Online Safety Act 2023, PART 1 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 06 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

2 Overview of Act **U.K.**

- (1) Parts 2 to 9 and 11 and 12 of this Act contain provision about the regulation by OFCOM of certain internet services.
- (2) Part 2 contains key definitions, including the definition of a user-to-user service, a search service, a Part 3 service and a regulated service.
- (3) Part 3 imposes duties of care on providers of user-to-user services and search services and requires OFCOM to issue codes of practice about those duties.
- (4) Part 4 imposes further duties on providers of user-to-user services and search services.
- (5) Part 5 imposes duties on providers of internet services (including user-to-user services and search services) that publish certain pornographic content.
- (6) Part 6, which imposes requirements to pay fees to OFCOM, applies to providers of internet services to which the duties in Part 3, 4 or 5 apply (“regulated services”).
- (7) Part 7 is about OFCOM’s powers and duties in relation to regulated services (including powers to obtain information and enforcement powers).
- (8) Part 8 is about appeals and complaints relating to regulated services.
- (9) Part 9 is about the Secretary of State’s functions in relation to regulated services.
- (10) Part 10 contains communications offences.
- (11) Parts 11 and 12 contain supplementary provisions including an index of terms defined in this Act (see section 237).

Commencement Information

12 S. 2 in force at Royal Assent, see [s. 240\(4\)\(a\)](#)

Changes to legislation:

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[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 80(6A) inserted by [2024 c. 15 Sch. 7 para. 5\(2\)\(b\)](#)