

## Twitter bans revenge porn in new crackdown on online abuse

Social media site Twitter has changed its privacy rules to prevent users from posting explicit material without the consent of the person involved



Twitter has banned revenge porn from its platform Photo: Alamy

By Claire Cohen

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Twitter has banned users from posting 'revenge porn'.

In a move designed to crackdown on abuse and harrassment on the social media site, intimate images or footage - uploaded without the consent of the person featured - will no longer be tolerated.

The move comes after CEO Dick Costolo recently admitted that Twitter "sucks" when it comes to tackling online trolls.

New rules, posted in the 'privacy' section of the site, state: "You may not post intimate photos or videos that were taken or distributed without the subject's consent."

While the latest Twitter tools ban users from posting personal information, videos or photographs of another person.

Those who complain about explicit material will have to verify their identity and prove they have not given permission for it to be publicly shared.

Users who violate the new revenge porn rules will have their accounts locked unless they delete the offending information. Those who repeatedly post such material will see their accounts suspended.



Revenge porn is a criminal offence in England and Wales (Alamy)

Earlier this year, **social platform Reddit** – which has 160 million users - tightened its rules on revenge porn, following the **high-profile hacking of nude photos of Jennifer Lawrence**, which were posted on its forums.

The actress called the act a "sex crime".

The site committed to taking down naked images or videos of those engaged in sexual acts, as well as links to explicit content, if the person depicted had not consented for the material to be shared.

In England and Wales, new Government legislation - introduced last month - made the posting of revenge porn images a criminal offence. Anyone found guilty of distributing intimate images of a person, without their consent, now faces up to two years in prison.

The law covers images posted on social platforms, or sent via text messages. It describes revenge porn as: "photographs or films which show people engaged in

sexual activity or depicted in a sexual way or with their genitals exposed, where what is shown would not usually be seen in public".



Dick Costolo, chief executive of Twitter (Reuters)

Last month, **a leaked memo to staff from CEO Costolo** said: "We suck at dealing with abuse and trolls on the platform and we've sucked at it for years.

"It's no secret that the rest of the world talks about it every day. We lose core user after core user by not addressing simple trolling issues that they face every day."

The site also hopes to prevent the reposting of revenge porn.

A spokesperson said: "Twitter is continuing to explore product solutions to allow us to act faster and more efficiently to protect our users".

But critics have pointed out the ease with which users can create new accounts, under different names and questioned whether the new rules will truly impact the site's easy anonymity.

A recent report estimated there were **90,000 accounts supporting extremist group ISIS** on Twitter.

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