

STATE OF NEW YORK

4512--A

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 5, 2021

Introduced by Sen. KAPLAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Internet and Technology -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to requiring social media networks to provide and maintain mechanisms for reporting vaccine misinformation on their platform

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new section
2 394-ccc to read as follows:

3 § 394-ccc. Social media networks; vaccine misinformation prohibited.

4 1. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the following
5 meanings:

6 (a) "Vaccine misinformation" means a public expression, either verbally,
7 in writing or through images, which intentionally is misleading
8 about vaccines, vaccine side effects, vaccine components, vaccine effi-
9 cacy, the relationship between illness and vaccines, or any other
10 substantive information as it relates to vaccines.

11 (b) "Social media network" means service providers, which, for
12 profit-making purposes, operate internet platforms that are designed to
13 enable users to share any content with other users or to make such
14 content available to the public.

15 2. A social media network that conducts business in the state, shall
16 provide and maintain a clear and easily accessible mechanism for indi-
17 vidual users to report incidents of vaccine misinformation. Such mech-
18 anism shall be clearly accessible to users of such network and easily
19 accessed from both a social media networks' application and website, and
20 shall allow the social media network to provide a direct response to any
21 individual reporting vaccine misinformation informing them of how the
22 matter is being handled.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD08384-03-1

1 3. Each social media network shall have a clear and concise policy
2 readily available and accessible on their website and application which
3 includes how such social media network will respond and address the
4 reports of incidents of vaccine misinformation on their platform.

5 4. Nothing in this section shall be construed (a) as an obligation
6 imposed on a social media network that adversely affects the rights or
7 freedoms of any persons, such as exercising the right of free speech
8 pursuant to the first amendment to the United States Constitution, or
9 (b) to add to or increase liability of a social media network for
10 anything other than the failure to provide a mechanism for a user to
11 report to the social media network any incidents of vaccine misinforma-
12 tion on their platform and to receive a response on such report.

13 5. Any social media platform that knowingly fails to comply with the
14 requirements of this section shall be assessed a civil penalty for such
15 violation by the attorney general not to exceed one thousand dollars.
16 Each day such offense shall continue shall constitute a separate addi-
17 tional violation. In determination of any such violation, the attorney
18 general shall be authorized to take proof and make a determination of
19 the relevant facts and to issue subpoenas in accordance with the civil
20 practice law and rules.

21 § 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
22 it shall have become a law.