

Meta loses trial after arguing child exploitation was “inevitable” on its apps

A jury has been deliberating for more than a week in that case, and though they've reached a decision on liability, they're currently deadlocked on the amount of financial damages to award. On Monday, they confirmed to a judge that they can't reach consensus for one of the defendants, a Los Angeles NBC affiliate reported, but it's unclear which.

In a separate federal trial in California, parents and multiple school districts are targeting Meta and other apps for allegedly causing mental health harms to kids.

While some social media companies have chosen to settle rather than endure costly legal battles over child safety, Meta has stuck these fights out. Unsurprisingly, Meta's spokesperson confirmed to Ars on Tuesday that the company plans to appeal the New Mexico verdict.

“We respectfully disagree with the verdict and will appeal,” Meta's spokesperson said. “We work hard to keep people safe on our platforms and are clear about the challenges of identifying and removing bad actors or harmful content. We will continue to defend ourselves vigorously, and we remain confident in our record of protecting teens online.”

Torrez remains intent on proving that Meta can and should do more to protect kids, he told CNBC Tuesday. He's hoping that any changes required in New Mexico will alter how Meta's apps are used around the world.

“One of the things that I am really focused on is how we can change the design features of these products, at least within New Mexico, and that would create a standard that could then be modeled elsewhere in the country, and, frankly, around the world,” Torrez said.

<https://arstechnica.com/tech-policy/2026/03/meta-loses-trial-after-arguing-child-exploitation-was-inevitable-on-its-apps/>