

Roblox is locking down sexual content and access to 'adult' locations after lawsuits

Roblox is updating its policies prohibiting romantic or sexual content to also forbid “content, settings, or behavior that *implies* sexual activity,” according to a Friday post from chief safety officer Matt Kaufman (emphasis Kaufman’s).

The changes follow recent lawsuits against the company, including one from Louisiana Attorney General Liz Murrill that alleges the platform creates an environment where “child predators thrive.” It claims Roblox has “directly facilitated the widespread sexual exploitation of minors and inflicted severe, lasting harm upon the children of Louisiana.”

In response, Roblox said that “any assertion that Roblox would intentionally put our users at risk of exploitation is simply untrue.” Roblox has rolled out many safety-focused features in recent months, including an age estimator tool for users to verify they are over 13 so they can chat with “Trusted Connections,” accounts parents can use to remotely manage their kids’ accounts, and blocking kids under 13 from accessing social hangout spaces. “Fix it, or shut it down!” Murrill replied.

According to Kaufman’s post, in the “coming months,” Roblox will restrict all unrated experiences – previously restricted to players who are 13 or older – to just the developer and anyone “actively working on the experience.” If a developer wants to make these experiences public, they will have to fill out a questionnaire to receive a content maturity label.

Roblox is also rolling out “new technology to detect violative scenes,” which is intended to detect user behavior that violates Roblox’s rules in experiences that are otherwise compliant with its policies, such as inappropriate drawings in an experience with a drawing feature. “If this feature detects a server with a high volume of violative user behavior, the system will automatically take that server down,” Kaufman says.

Social hangout spaces depicting private spaces like bedrooms and bathrooms, as well as experiences primarily set in private spaces and in places like virtual bars and clubs, will now only be available to users who are 17 or older and have verified their ID. Developers will have to verify that they are 17 years or older if they want to make an experience for users in that same age group.

<https://www.theverge.com/news/760805/roblox-sexual-content-law-suit-age-verification>