Spotify is cracking down on family plan sharing again by asking for user locations

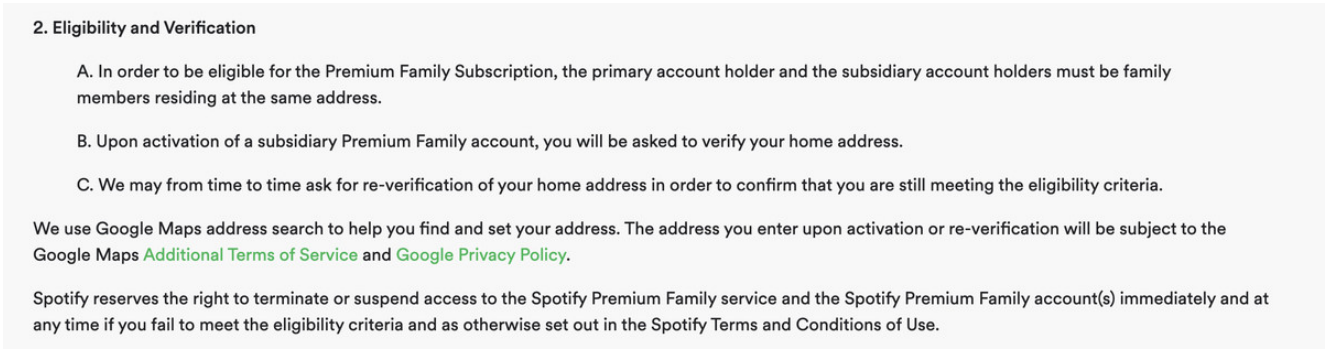
Spotify is cracking down on family plan sharing – again. According to a new set of terms and conditions for the plan that the company published back in August, Spotify is now requiring the primary account holder and everyone else on the plan to show proof that they reside at the same address, which it will now confirm from "time to time" by asking users to verify their addresses, as spotted by *CNET*.

This isn't the first time that Spotify has tried to crack down on customers taking advantage of family plan sharing. The company sent out a similar warning last year that asked users to confirm their exact GPS coordinates, but it ended the test shortly afterward, following privacy concerns.

Now, a slightly less invasive version of the policy is part and parcel of the terms and conditions for using the family plan. That suggests it's here to stay.

As Spotify's fine print notes, the shared family plan – which costs $15 and allows six users to access Spotify's Premium service – is only for "family members residing at the same address." New accounts will be required to verify their address using Google Maps, and Spotify "may from time to time ask for re-verification" of your home address. If you fail to meet those criteria, Spotify notes that it can terminate or suspend your family plan.

It's still unclear to what extent Spotify will be pursuing this kind of account verification or if it actually intends to cancel accounts that are violating the geographic limits. But the new terms do state that it *can.*



2. Eligibility and Verification

A. In order to be eligible for the Premium Family Subscription, the primary account holder and the subsidiary account holders must be family members residing at the same address.

B. Upon activation of a subsidiary Premium Family account, you will be asked to verify your home address.

C. We may from time to time ask for re-verification of your home address in order to confirm that you are still meeting the eligibility criteria.

We use Google Maps address search to help you find and set your address. The address you enter upon activation or re-verification will be subject to the Google Maps Additional Terms of Service and Google Privacy Policy.

Spotify reserves the right to terminate or suspend access to the Spotify Premium Family service and the Spotify Premium Family account(s) immediately and at any time if you fail to meet the eligibility criteria and as otherwise set out in the Spotify Terms and Conditions of Use.

Family plan sharing obviously costs Spotify a lot of money. A *Billboard* report from last year claims that nearly half of all streaming customers are on family plans, which cost far less per user than the standard $10-per-month individual plans.

By cracking down on family plan members who aren't living in the same home, Spotify is presumably hoping to drive those users to pay for their own subscription instead of glomming on to their old roommate's plan from across the country. There is the possibility, however, that these customers might be driven to a competitor's more lenient family plan, like Apple Music or even Tidal, that doesn't demand location verification.

https://www.theverge.com/2019/9/12/20863066/spotify-family-plan-sharing-location-terms-conditions