



President Trump's Executive Order Takes Aim at Social Media, Broadcasters

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President Trump's Executive Order (EO) titled, "Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship" is the administration's first step to pursue the President's content moderation goals for broadcast outlets and social media. President Trump has made clear his view that fact-checking by online platforms and broadcasters interferes with free speech. The purpose of this Executive Order is set forth in Section 1:

Over the last 4 years, the previous administration trampled free speech rights by censoring Americans' speech on online platforms, often by exerting substantial coercive pressure on third parties, such as social media companies, to moderate, deplatform, or otherwise suppress speech that the Federal Government did not approve. Under the guise of combatting "misinformation," "disinformation," and "malinformation," the Federal Government infringed on the constitutionally protected speech rights of American citizens across the United States in a manner that advanced the Government's preferred narrative about significant matters of public debate. Government censorship of speech is intolerable in a free society.

The principal action item in this EO is for the Attorney General, working with the heads of executive departments and agencies such as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), to "investigate the activities of the Federal Government over the last 4 years that are inconsistent with the purposes and policies of this order [to restore free speech and end federal censorship], and prepare a report to be submitted to the President . . . with recommendations for appropriate remedial actions to be taken based on the findings of the report."

Social media platforms are not, however, the sole focus of the President's and the FCC's content moderation concerns. In 2024, President-elect Trump and then-Commissioner Carr suggested that the FCC might investigate and take action against broadcasters—potentially up to and including license revocation—who, in the administration's view, do not live up to their public interest obligations.

For more information on the EO and potential next steps, please read our detailed analysis [here](#).

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