

**ORDINANCE**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Chicago has experienced repeated unlawful gatherings organized through social media that have resulted in violence, property damage, and threats to public safety; and

**WHEREAS**, some of these incidents have involved large numbers of minors and have required substantial deployment of City resources; and

**WHEREAS**, social media platforms are frequently used to promote or coordinate such events, and timely communication between the City and platform operators is necessary to mitigate foreseeable risks; and

**WHEREAS**, the City recognizes that it cannot compel social media platforms to monitor all user-generated content, but the City can require timely cooperation, responsive communication, and written justification when a platform refuses to remove content that has been specifically identified by City authorities as promoting imminent unlawful activity and a public safety threat; and

**WHEREAS**, establishing clear cooperation requirements for social media platforms will support the Chicago Police Department, the Office of Emergency Management and Communications, and Corporation Counsel in preventing violence and addressing public safety threats; now, therefore,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 8-4-010 of the Municipal Code of Chicago is hereby amended by adding the following subsections:

**8-4-010. Social media cooperation for public safety.**

(a) Definitions. For purposes of this section:

(1) "Covered platform" means any online service, website, or application with more than 1,000,000 monthly active users in the United States that allows users to create or share user-generated content.

(2) "Unlawful teen gathering" means any event within the City of Chicago that is promoted or coordinated primarily for participants under 21 years of age and is reasonably believed to involve conduct in violation of federal, state, or City law, including but not limited to unlawful possession or use of alcohol, controlled substances, or firearms; violent or disorderly conduct; or trespass or damage to property.

(3) "City notice" means written notice issued by the Chicago Police Department, the Office of Emergency Management and Communications, or the Department of Law that identifies specific user-generated content and states the City's determination that such content appears to promote an unlawful minor gathering.

(b) Cooperation requirement. Upon receipt of City notice, a covered platform shall, within six (6) hours, do all of the following:

(1) Acknowledge receipt of the City notice in writing;

(2) Inform the City whether the covered platform has removed, restricted access to, or otherwise disabled public visibility of the identified content; and

(3) If choosing not to remove or restrict the content, the covered platform shall provide the City with a written justification explaining, with reasonable specificity, why the platform has determined that the identified content: (i) does not promote an unlawful teen gathering as defined in subsection (a)(2); (ii) does not create a reasonably foreseeable danger to public safety; and (iii) does not require removal under the platform's own stated terms of service or policies.

Failure to provide the acknowledgement or the written explanation required under this subsection constitutes a violation.

(c) Civil penalties. Any covered platform that fails to comply with subsection (b) shall be subject to a civil fine of \$50,000.00 for each violation. Each City notice for which the covered platform fails to comply within six (6) hours shall constitute a separate and independent offense.

(d) Public nuisance; enforcement authority.

(1) The City of Chicago establishes that persistent non-compliance with this section, together with failure to address content identified in a City notice, is declared a public nuisance.

(2) Corporation Counsel is authorized to bring a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction seeking: (i) injunctive relief; (ii) civil penalties; (iii) recovery of costs incurred by the City, including police deployment, EMS response, and property damage directly related to gatherings promoted in posts identified in City notices; and (iv) any other appropriate relief.

(e) Construction. Nothing in this section shall be construed to: (1) require any platform to proactively monitor or screen user-generated content; (2) Restrict lawful expression protected under the United States or Illinois Constitutions; or (3) impose criminal liability on any covered platform.

f) Accountability for organizers of unlawful teen gatherings. (1) Any individual or entity that knowingly or recklessly promotes or coordinates an unlawful minor gathering that results in extraordinary City response may be liable for civil penalties and cost recovery.

(2) Assessment of City costs. The City may recover documented costs for police, emergency medical services, sanitation, traffic control, or property restoration directly attributable to the gathering, provided that:

(A) the organizer's conduct contributed to the creation, escalation, or continuation of the public safety hazard;

(B) the assessed costs shall not exceed the actual and necessary expenses incurred by the City; and

(C) prior to the imposition of any assessment, the organizer shall receive written notice and an opportunity to contest liability through an administrative review process consistent with due-process protections.

(3) Mitigating factors: In determining penalties, the City may consider the age of participants, efforts to cancel or de-escalate the event, the absence of intent to cause harm, and cooperation with City authorities. Penalties shall not be imposed in a manner that disproportionately burdens minors.

(4) Restorative alternatives. The City may substitute, in whole or in part, monetary penalties with restorative programs, community service, or youth development or violence-prevention services.

(5) Aggravating factor for organizer(s): prior unlawful events. It shall be considered an aggravating factor if the organizer has a documented history of promoting, coordinating, or facilitating prior illegal events within the City of Chicago that have resulted in violence, property damage, arrests, or violations of any provision of this Code or of state law.

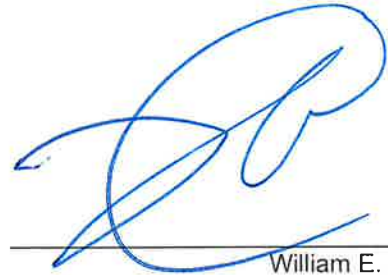
(g) Aggravating factors for social media platforms: prior knowledge, patterns, and failures to act.

(1) In determining penalties, nuisance findings, or cost recovery under this section, it shall be considered an aggravating factor if the social media platform has previously received City notices concerning the same user, account, or organizer, or if the platform knew or reasonably should have known — based on prior posts, enforcement actions, or past City notices — that the content at issue was promoting an unlawful teen gathering or posed a reasonably foreseeable public safety risk.


(2) A covered platform shall be deemed to have knowledge where a reasonable platform operator would have recognized the content as substantially similar to prior content flagged by the City as promoting unlawful teen gatherings.

(3) Repeated failures to act on such information, or failure to implement reasonable measures to prevent recurrence, shall justify enhanced civil penalties and strengthened injunctive relief.

**SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication.**



William E. Hall  
Alderman, 6th Ward

---

2nd Ward