

## IMPORTANT NOTICE TO DISTRIBUTORS

### RE: COVID-19 ANTI-VACCINATION CONTENT

The Distribution Standards Board (DSB) has been engaged across Australia and New Zealand to review anti-vaccination collateral being distributed via the letterbox channel.

Following a review of several individual flyers, anti-vaccination correspondence has been deemed 'adult content'. That is, content contravening National, Commonwealth and State Health Orders is deemed not appropriate for the g-rating requirement of the Code for the Letterbox channel, in this regard the content would either need to be distributed with a carrier through the letterbox or declined for distribution.

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In review of two specific examples provided, querying whether the material was allowed to be distributed in an open format, the ruling is as follows:

*"The Distribution Standards Board (DSB) is the industry self-regulating body for Letterbox distribution across Australia and now, New Zealand.*

*The Code of Conduct to which all signatories must remain compliant is attached for your reference, however, pertinent to the query the DSB notes the following:*

*The Letterbox remains a g-rated media channel. That is, the industry acknowledges and advocates, that children have access to all letterbox content and therefore materials must be compliant to a g-rated level in the primary instance, above and beyond freedom of speech or other legislative compliances. The publications of anti-vaccination are not considered g-rateable and therefore require a carrier (envelope or sealed carrier) to not leave content exposure before being able to be distributed via the letterbox channel. It is our advice these publications not be distributed via the letterbox across Australia or New Zealand due to the content not meeting g-rated standards and no carrier compliance recorded.*

*The DSB also provides an addendum preference for materials to be enclosed in a sealed carrier or envelope to ensure not content is exposed. This is an additional ruling from initial review communications.*

*The DSB does not publish rulings on individual cases, however from review of the files in this matter, the contravention ruling was noted against Item 7 of the DSB Code of Conduct.*

*"Item 7. Will not deliver content of explicit material in the common understanding that all sections of the community, in particular children, have ready access to the Letterbox. This includes content of an adult rating and/or may portray people or other, in a way that discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief."*

*In the current global pandemic, any inconsistencies to Government Public Health Orders or Advice have been deemed content appropriate for adult consumption.*

Please note the language selection, 'inconsistencies' as opposed to contraventions or challenges, as the DSB is not considering matters from a censorship perspective, rather from the Code we operate within, specifically in this matter to item 7 regarding explicit content.

Should you require the DSB to review any further content in this area including your carrier solutions, please forward and we will do so in accordance with the Code and previous rulings operating under established precedent outlined above.

Yours Sincerely,



**Kellie Northwood**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Distribution Standards Board

Cc: The Real Media Collective

**The DSB is the self-regulatory body of The Real Media Collective across Australia and New Zealand.**

This Charter sets out the DSB's commitment to providing a high level of standards for all letterbox distribution suppliers and recipients alike. The DSB is designed to ensure the industry meets the agreed guidelines to ensure catalogues and unaddressed advertising mail are delivered to the highest standards.

The primary function of the Charter is to maintain agreed levels of privacy, litter control, cooperation with local authorities and compliance with all environmental guidelines.

The DSB will ensure that member's performance in complying with this Charter is monitored on a regular basis.

## DSB CODE OF PRACTICE

Members of the industry and their contact deliverers agree to uphold the spirit of the code in all respects. Be conscious at all times of the need to respect individual privacy and personal taste of the consumer. Ensure that any delivery with which they are associated is consistent with a high standard of performance.

### Abide by the following guidelines.

1. **Do Not** place material in receptacles where a sign requesting non delivery is displayed. (Does not apply to newspapers)
2. **Do Not** deliver material where there is no receptacle to receive such material or where the receptacle is unsuitable for such material.
3. **Do Not** leave multiple copies unsecured unless the resident or Authorised Officer takes full responsibility.
4. **Do Not** deliver material where there is an obvious overflow of other such material, or remove other articles to make room for your delivery.
5. **Do Not** throw or generally litter or leave items on the ground that have been pushed out by your delivery.
6. **Only** deliver to receptacles that are designed to take letters or newspapers and ensure that material is secure.
7. **Will not** deliver content of explicit material in the common understanding that all sections of the community, in particular children, have ready access to the Letterbox. This includes content of an adult rating and/or may portray people or other, in a way that discriminates against or vilifies a person or section of the community on account of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual preference, religion, disability, mental illness or political belief.

### Deliverers will:

- Where possible, fully insert all items into the receptacle utilising the newspaper slot, where available, or otherwise the letter slot.
- Pickup and replace any items that may be pushed out while other material is being placed in the receptacle.
- Ensure that delivered items are secure and unlikely to fall out of the receptacle. Particularly on windy days.

### Companies will:

- Immediately react to queries or complaints.
- Cleanup any litter caused by incorrect delivery practices.
- Cooperate fully with local authorities.
- Provide details of deliverers responsible for littering offenses to relevant authorities.
- Each year supply all deliverers with a copy of the Code of Practice and supply copies to new deliverers before they start.
- Provide ongoing training in 'industry-best' work practices.
- Enforce the Code of Practice to the best of their abilities in the interest of customers, community and the industry.
- Ensure items for delivery are not of an "adults-only" nature as letterboxes are easily accessible to children.