

How we lock accounts on The Conversation

Written by Cory Zaroni, Community Manager, The Conversation

I dislike locking people's accounts on The Conversation. I want as many people as possible to leave as many comments sharing as many opinions as possible on our articles.

But, on occasion, we have locked accounts. It's worth explaining how and why. In part so the process is understood by everyone and in part so we can have a discussion about that process.

An account can be locked for two reasons: repeat violations of our [community standards](#) or upon user request.

Violating our community standards

Commenters who violate our standards receive two warnings and, if they continue to violate our standards, the account will be locked.

I try to allow some flexibility about when and why warnings are given out. I, for example, treat abusive or discriminatory comments more seriously than comments that are just off-topic.

Both are violations of our community standards and are worth removing but you're more likely to receive a formal warning after your first abusive comment than you are for your first off-topic comment. Context and severity are important considerations for how we lock accounts.

When someone's account is locked their profile is removed from public view. That means their name on their comments will be black — the link to their profile has been removed. Comments posted on our articles will remain in place.

User accounts are for The Conversation as a global platform. That encompasses all of our regions, current and future. This means commenters can't have an account locked for commenting on articles commissioned in Australia and then make an account for The Conversation US.

Warnings

There are circumstances where a commenter mightn't get two warnings. If they're violating our real names policy they, generally, will only get one warning. If a commenter violates our standards in an extreme way they may only get one warning. If a commenter has their account locked and then makes a new account they won't be warned at all.

All warnings will come via email. It's your responsibility to have a valid, working email attached to your account. Our being unable to contact you won't stop us from locking your account if need be.

How long are accounts locked for?

Accounts that are locked for violating our standards are locked permanently. Commenters may, in rare cases, receive a temporary ban before being banned permanently but, thus far, this has been the exception rather than the rule.

User request

Users can request to have their accounts locked. This process is explained in our [content removal policy](#)

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If you no longer wish to use your account on The Conversation it will be locked so it's no longer viewable by the public. Your comments will remain on the site with your name attached to them – your name will no longer link to your profile. If you are an academic author your name will continue to appear on any articles you've previously published.

People are welcome to return at a later date. They can get in touch with us and ask to have their accounts unlocked.

Staying inclusive

Creating an inclusive space where as many people can have conversations does, inevitably,

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require saying some people are no longer welcome to take part. There will always be people who have no interest in following our community standards.

We set ourselves a lofty goal for our comments:

We want the discussion of an article to be, if anything, more illuminating than the original article and we need your help to do that.

Locking accounts is part of our attempt to achieve that goal. Hopefully this post helps explain our approach.

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Read more <http://theconversation.com/how-we-lock-accounts-on-the-conversation-62703>