



133 Molesworth Street  
PO Box 5013  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand  
T+64 4 496 2000

17 September 2024

Erika Whittome

By email: [fyi-request-27311-04b7a3e4@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-27311-04b7a3e4@requests.fyi.org.nz)  
Ref: H2024046938

Tēnā koe Erika

### **Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your follow up request to the Ministry of Health – Manatū Hauora (the Ministry) on 22 July 2024 regarding the Ministry's working relationship with YouTube. You requested:

*"The Ministry can advise that these items were administrative in nature regarding the Google content. Please contact us at [oiagr@health.govt.nz](mailto:oiagr@health.govt.nz) if you would like to request further information on this matter. I requested all the correspondence. Please would you make an export or dump file of this correspondence as per this particular request for information in the statutory timeframe. Dropbox may be an option if the file is too large for this platform."*

As advised in the Ministry's earlier response to you (H2024044867 refers) there was a large number of items identified in your request (9,252 items). Therefore, you were asked to shorten the timeframe and specify a topic of interest on 30 July 2024.

The Ministry thanks you for your suggestion to export the items into a dropbox. However, due to security concerns the Ministry does not export items onto external websites.

Although the Ministry has not received a response from you to date regarding a refinement of your request, the Ministry has filtered the search results down further using search terms and manually reviewing subject headers of emails. There are 5 documents that have been identified as the substance of the emails are in scope of your request. These documents are itemised in Appendix 1 and copies of the documents enclosed. A small amount of information is withheld under section 9 of the Act. Where this has occurred, I have considered the countervailing public interest in release in making this decision and consider that it does not outweigh the need to withhold at this time.

Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā



Phil Knipe  
**Acting Deputy Director-General**  
**Government and Executive Services | Te Pou Whakatere Kāwanatanga**

## Appendix 1: List of documents for release

	Date	Document details	Decision on release
<b>1</b>	26 May 2021	Email correspondence: YouTube changing ToS to allow ads on everything	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act, to protect the privacy of natural persons.
<b>2</b>	14 September 2021	Email correspondence: MOH: YouTube Misinformation sync @ Tue, Sep 14, 2021 2:30pm-3:15pm (GMT+12)	
<b>2A</b>		Attachment: COVID-19 Misinformation Policy Two Sheeter.pdf	Released in full.
<b>3</b>	4 October 2021	Email correspondence: YouTube – Talent Release Form	Some information withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Act.
<b>3A</b>		Attachment: 04102021084609-0001.pdf (223.77 KB)	Released in full.

---

**From:** Andrew Leggott  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 26 May 2021 5:03 pm  
**To:** Paul Giles; Sophia Farrington-Pech; Emma Blackmore; Christine Ross; Peter Abernethy  
**Subject:** FW: YouTube changing ToS to allow ads on everything

Hi

Just a heads up below on upcoming change to YouTube's terms of service, which **might** result in a lot more advertising appearing in and around our video content.

We'll need to keep a close eye on this – there has already been some cross-govt discussion about what it might mean for agency content.

Thanks

Andrew

**Andrew Leggott** | Manager, Digital Communication Channels |  
Office of the Director General | Ministry of Health

Mobile **S9(2)(a)**

Andrew.leggott@health.govt.nz  
[www.health.govt.nz](http://www.health.govt.nz)

---

**From:** Cara Pollock <Cara.Pollock@health.govt.nz>

From 1 June, YouTube are changing their terms of service to allow them to monetise any videos hosted with them (ie, put ads on them).

If you are in their partnership programme (which allows you to make money off the ads), you have a measure of control over which ads are displayed (can opt out of particular categories), but it is not something that allows you to opt out of ads altogether.

It's not clear how widely they will be rolling out ads (if they will put them on everything or have some kind of criteria or if they're just giving themselves the option).

FAQ updated terms of service:  
<https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10090902>

Cara Pollock  
Senior Advisor  
Digital Communication Channels  
Communications and Engagement  
Ministry of Health  
**S9(2)(a)**

---

**From:** S9(2)(a) [REDACTED]@google.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 14 September 2021 7:48 pm  
**To:** Caroline Carruthers; Charlie Sklenar; Linda Major (Clemenger BBDO); Lisa Rapley [DPMC]; Nick Ascough; Rachel Prince [DPMC]  
**Subject:** MoH: YouTube Misinformation sync @ Tue, Sep 14, 2021 2:30pm – 3:15pm (GMT+12)  
**Attachments:** COVID-19 Misinformation Policy Two Sheeter.pdf

Hi team,

Thanks for your time today!

Here is the follow up summary Ross discussed.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks so much

S9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

--

- S9(2) [REDACTED]
- S9(2)(a) [REDACTED] ncy & Ecosystem
- S9(2)(a) [REDACTED] e.com
- S9(2)(a) [REDACTED]

Please n [REDACTED] on Wednesday

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982



# Elevating authoritative information and combating COVID-19 misinformation

In times of crisis, Google and YouTube want to make it easy for people to find accurate and up-to-date information. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to evolve, we are focused on elevating authoritative information, combating misinformation on our services and supporting the efforts of others who are also working to that end.



How are Google and YouTube highlighting trustworthy information around COVID-19?

Since the beginning of the year, search interest in COVID-19 has [grown](#) around the world. To help people find the information they need across our products, we're **surfacing trusted information and partnering with health organizations and governments** to bring our users authoritative information in a rapidly changing environment:

- **In Search**, we have introduced a [comprehensive experience](#) for COVID-19 that provides easy access to information from health authorities alongside new data and visualizations. This new format organizes the search results page to help people easily navigate resources and makes it possible to add more information as it becomes available over time. This experience comes as a complement to pre-existing work on [Google Search](#) and [Google News](#) to recognize sensitive events and contexts, and our systems are designed to elevate authoritative sources for those classes of queries.
- **On the Google Home Page**, in partnership with the World Health Organization and other health authorities, we are promoting important guidance to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The efforts, including "Stay Home" doodles and messaging on our homepage, have launched in more than 100 countries to date.
- **Across YouTube**, we are elevating authoritative sources such as the WHO and local authorities to help users get the latest COVID-19 information. We've launched a [COVID-19 news shelf](#) on our homepage that features stories from authoritative publishers and local health authorities, [health information panels](#) in search results that feature information on COVID-19 symptoms, prevention, and treatment, and [links to local health authorities](#) on the watch pages of COVID-19 related videos. In addition, YouTube elevates content from authoritative channels such as news organizations or health authorities when our systems detect that a user's search is health-related.
- **In Google News**, we have created a new COVID-19 section with links to up-to-date, relevant stories from the international to local levels from a variety of authoritative sources. The [section](#) is now available to users across 40 top impacted markets and puts local news front and center by highlighting stories about the virus from local publishers in the reader's area.
- **On Google Maps**, we are making it easier to find authoritative information about local health resources, including COVID-19 testing sites, shelters, food banks and virtual healthcare options where available. We're also using authoritative data sources to display updated information about whether local businesses are open during COVID-19. In addition, we're providing businesses with new ways to update their listing information and service offerings such as restaurants that are offering takeout or delivery, but are closed for dine-in.
- **On Google Play**, we prioritize the review and publication of policy-compliant apps published, commissioned or authorized by official government entities and public health organizations. Authorized COVID-19 apps must comply with all Play Developer policies, including [User Data](#), [Permissions](#), and [Malicious Behavior](#). We also launched a "stay informed" page in the Play Store with apps that can help users stay informed and prepared during the crisis, using authoritative sources such as the WHO app.
- A **new website**, which provides resources dedicated to COVID-19 education and prevention, has also been released. It is available on [www.google.com/COVID-19](http://www.google.com/COVID-19) in more than twenty languages and we're continually working to expand its coverage.

What are Google and YouTube doing to prevent misinformation on its platforms amid COVID-19?

In addition to elevating authoritative information, we take active steps to detect and remove COVID-19 related misinformation that contradicts guidance from health authorities and may result in real-world harm:

- **On YouTube**, our [Community Guidelines](#) prohibit content that encourages dangerous or illegal activities that risk serious physical harm or death, including certain types of medical misinformation. As the COVID-19 situation has evolved, we have partnered closely with the World Health Organization and local health authorities to ensure that our policy enforcement is effective in preventing the spread of harmful misinformation relating to COVID-19. Our policies prohibit, for example, content that explicitly disputes the efficacy of WHO or local health authority advice regarding social distancing that may lead people to act against that guidance. We enforce these policies diligently and, in addition, continue the work we [initiated in 2019](#) to reduce recommendations of borderline content or videos that could misinform users in harmful ways.





## What are Google and YouTube doing to prevent misinformation on its platforms amid COVID-19?

(cont.)

- On **Google Play**, our policies prohibit developers from capitalizing on sensitive events. Our long-standing content policies strictly prohibit apps that feature health-related content or functionalities that are misleading or potentially harmful, including about COVID-19. Apps that violate these policies will be removed.
- On **Maps**, our policies prohibit misinformation about prevention, transmission and treatment services, as well as allegations that an individual contracted COVID-19 at a particular location. These types of contributed content will be removed.
- On **Google Ads**, our [policies](#) do not allow ads that potentially profit from or exploit a sensitive event with significant social, cultural, or political impact, such as a public health emergency. We are making exceptions for COVID-related ads from government organizations, healthcare providers, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, verified election ads advertisers and managed private sector accounts with a history of policy compliance who want to get relevant information out to the public. Ads that are allowed still have to abide by our [policies](#), which also [disallow](#) the promotion of harmful medical or health claims and practices. In addition, we are enforcing a temporary restriction on masks that may be vital for healthcare workers during the COVID-19 response to prevent advertising that may capitalize on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). We are also taking additional steps to prevent artificially inflated prices that limit or prohibit access to other essential items on Google's network. More information can be found in our [Google Ads Help Center](#).
- We continuously review and evolve these policies and our enforcement to respond to the changing landscape of COVID-19 related misinformation.

## How do Google and YouTube support the work of others who are also combating COVID-19 misinformation?

Helping the world make sense of information during a health crisis requires a broad-based response, involving scientists, journalists, public figures, technology platforms and many others. Our efforts include:

- **Offering \$250M in ad grants**, which have been extended into 2021, to help the World Health Organization and more than 100 global government agencies provide critical information on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other relief measures to local communities.
- **Committing \$50M to the global COVID-19 response** from [Google.org](#), with a focus on health and humanitarian efforts, distance learning, and economic relief and recovery. This includes \$8M to support the WHO's critical work and a [public matching campaign](#) to match donations from the public.
- **Supporting coronavirus fact-checking and verification efforts** through more than [\\$6.5 million in funding](#) from the [Google News Initiative](#) to fact-checkers and nonprofits fighting misinformation around the world, with an immediate concentration on COVID-19. In addition, we're working to increase access to data, scientific expertise and fact checks through support for collaborative databases and providing insights to fact-checkers, reporters and health authorities including sharing [localized data](#) from Google Trends on COVID-19 down to the city level.
- **Helping publishers deal with the challenges of reporting on COVID-19** through a new [Journalism Emergency Relief Fund](#) to deliver urgent aid to thousands of small, medium and local news organizations globally. The funding will range from the low thousands of dollars for small hyper-local newsrooms to low tens of thousands for larger newsrooms, with variations per region.

## Where can I find more information about Google and YouTube's response?

Google and YouTube are committed to providing trusted content in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as helping provide support to those impacted by the crisis. Learn more here:

- **Regular updates on our blog:** We continue to provide information on our response to coronavirus on a dedicated page on Google's [blog](#).
- **YouTube's Help Center:** Our response to COVID-19 is evolving every day. YouTube keeps a running list of updates on a [dedicated Help Center page, which](#) is regularly updated.
- **Our broader work to combat disinformation:** Our policy white paper, [How Google Fights Disinformation](#) (published in February 2019), provides further background on how we combat mis- and disinformation on our platforms beyond the context of the current crisis.



**From:** S9(2)(a) @google.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 October 2021 9:34 am  
**To:** Caroline Carruthers  
**Subject:** Re: YouTube - Talent Release Form

Incredible!! Thank you so much :)

On Mon, Oct 4, 2021 at 8:46 AM Caroline Carruthers <[Caroline.Carruthers@health.govt.nz](mailto:Caroline.Carruthers@health.govt.nz)> wrote:  
Hi S9(2)(a)

Yay - I have Ashley's signed copy of this release form. Please find attached.

Many thanks,  
Caroline

\*\*\*\*\*  
Statement of confidentiality: This e-mail message and any accompanying attachments may contain information that is IN-CONFIDENCE and subject to legal privilege.  
If you are not the intended recipient, do not read, use, disseminate, distribute or copy this message or attachments.  
If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete this message.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
This e-mail message has been scanned for Viruses and Content and cleared by the Ministry of Health's Content and Virus Filtering Gateway  
\*\*\*\*\*

--



- S9(2)(a)
  - Head of Agency & Ecosystem
  - S9(2)(a) @google.com
  - M: S9(2)(a)
- Please note I don't work on Wednesday

RELEASED UNDER THE OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT 1982



Enter text

FINISH

FINISH LATER

OTHER ACTIONS



DocuSign Envelope ID: 125609E1-CA2F-41E6-9AC7-D124E955D6E2

START

RELEASE FOR PHOTO, VIDEO AND OTHER MATERIALS

PROJECT ("Project"): COVID-19 vaccines

EVENT DATE (if applicable): NA

I authorize Google Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd. ("Google") and its affiliates to create an audio, visual, digital or other recording (including but not limited to, photographs, digital images, digital video, digital audio, videotape, audiotape, or transcript) of me in the Project (collectively, the "Recordings"). I grant to Google and its affiliates an unrestricted, sublicensable, assignable, irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide, non-exclusive and royalty-free license to use my name, voice, image, persona, likeness, interview, testimonial, performance, presentation and any materials supplied by me ("Materials") in the Recordings. Materials and Recordings are collectively referred to as "Content" in this release. This license includes without limitation the right to (i) reproduce, create derivative works of, and otherwise use the Content, in whole or in part, in any manner or in combination with any other material (the "Works"); and (ii) publicly display, publicly perform, sell, rent, distribute (directly or indirectly), transmit, or broadcast the Content and Works (including but not limited to use in videos, printed brochures, websites, emails, and blog posts). Google owns all intellectual property in the Recordings. Except for the rights and licenses granted in this release, each party retains all rights it would have independent of this release.

I am not entitled to receive any fee from Google. I waive all rights and release Google and its affiliates from any claim, whether now known or unknown, relating to the use and exploitation of the Content.

I represent and warrant that: (i) execution of this release will not cause any conflict with any contract by which I am bound; (ii) I have full power and authority to authorize this release and the power and authority to grant the rights and licenses relating to the Content; (iii) Materials do not defame anyone; and (iv) I will keep my participation in the Project confidential.

Each party to this release agrees to use electronic signatures. IN NO EVENT WILL EITHER PARTY BE LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGES UNDER THIS RELEASE IN EXCESS OF USD100. CALIFORNIA LAW, EXCLUDING CALIFORNIA'S CHOICE OF LAW RULES, WILL GOVERN ALL CLAIMS ARISING OUT OF OR RELATING TO THIS RELEASE. ALL CLAIMS WILL BE LITIGATED EXCLUSIVELY IN THE FEDERAL OR STATE COURTS OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, USA, AND THE PARTIES CONSENT TO PERSONAL JURISDICTION IN THOSE COURTS.

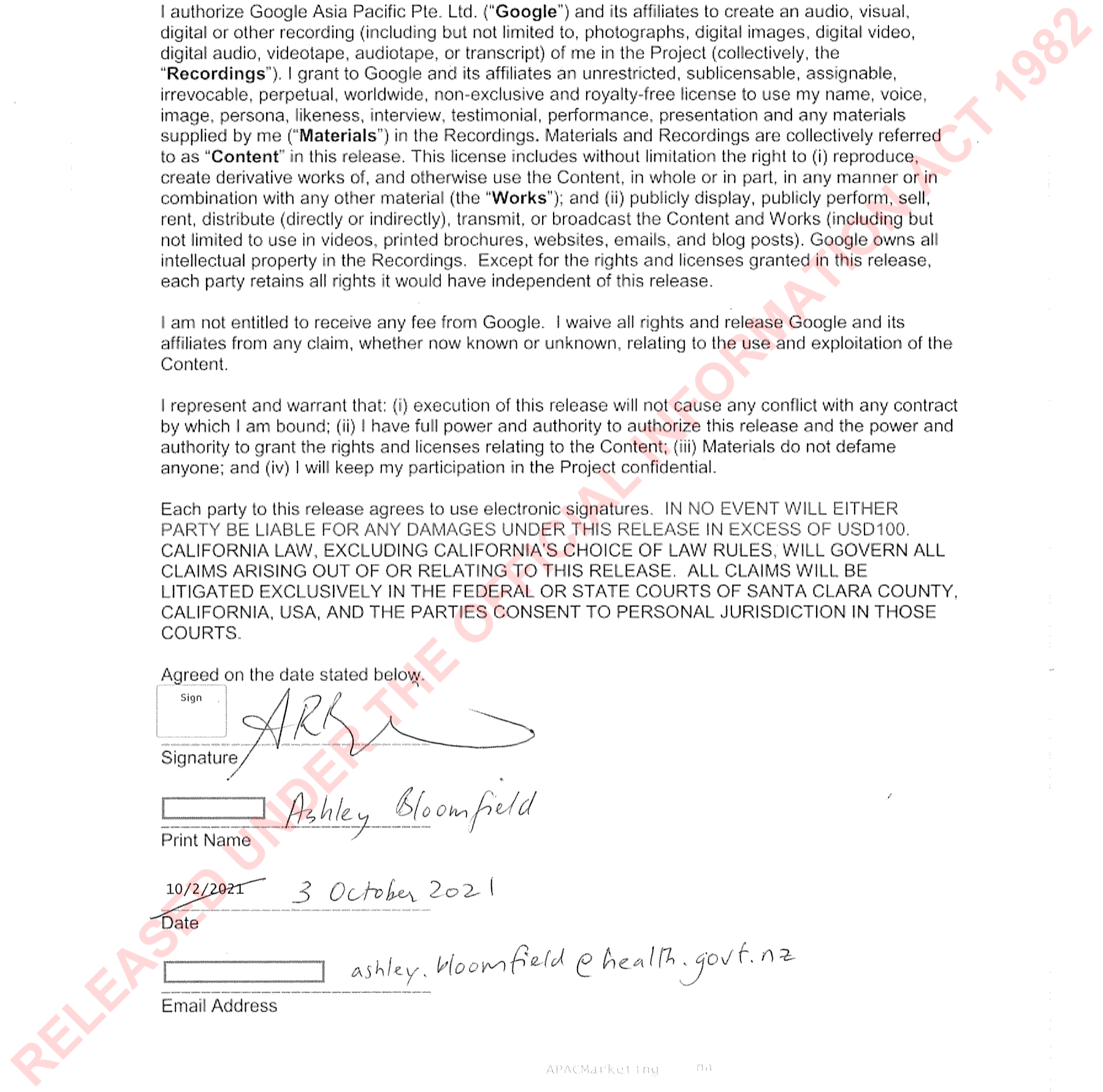
Agreed on the date stated below.

Sign [Signature]
Signature

[Print Name] Ashley Bloomfield
Print Name

10/2/2021 3 October 2021
Date

[Email Address] ashley.bloomfield@health.govt.nz
Email Address



APACMarketing na

FINISH