

Facebook removes another 900 accounts linked to hate groups

June 17 2020, by David Klepper



In this May 16, 2012, file photo, the Facebook logo is displayed on an iPad in Philadelphia. Facebook has removed hundreds more social media accounts that it says belonged to members of two different white supremacy groups. The company announced the takedowns on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, saying it had removed more than 900 accounts from Facebook and Instagram affiliated with the Proud Boys and American Guard, two hate groups already banned from their platforms. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke, File)

Facebook has removed another 900 social media accounts linked to white supremacy groups after members discussed plans to bring weapons to protests over police killings of black people.

The accounts on Facebook and Instagram were tied to the Proud Boys and the American Guard, two hate groups already banned on those platforms.

The company announced Tuesday that it recently took down 470 accounts belonging to people affiliated with the Proud Boys and another 430 linked to members of the American Guard.

Nearly 200 other accounts linked to the groups were removed late last month.

Facebook officials have said they were already monitoring the groups' social media presence and were led to act when they spotted posts attempting to exploit the ongoing protests prompted by the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Some of the accounts belonged to men reported to have participated in a brawl with protesters in Seattle, Facebook said. The company did not divulge details of the account users—such as their specific plans for protests or where in the U.S. they live.

"In both cases, we saw accounts from both organizations discussing attending protests in various US states with plans to carry weapons," the company said in a statement. "But we did not find indications in their on-platform content they planned to actively commit violence."

Both the Proud Boys and American Guard had been banned from Facebook for violating rules prohibiting hate speech. Facebook said it will continue to remove new pages, groups or accounts created by users

trying to circumvent the ban.

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