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Supreme Court: Public Officials Can be Sued for Blocking on Social Media

The U.S. Supreme Court [ruled earlier today that public officials can be sued](#) for blocking individuals on social media in specific situations if the account is used to release official statements, and they cannot delete comments.

The two lawsuits involved in the decision are [O'Connor-Ratcliff v. Garnier](#), where two parents were blocked by two California school board members, and [Lindke v. Freed](#), where a Michigan city manager blocked a city resident.

The ruling clarifies free-speech rights of public officials, and delineates what public officials are able to post on their official and private accounts. Justice Amy Coney Barret stating in the *Lindke v. Freed* decision, "When a government official posts about job-related topics on social media, it can be difficult to tell whether the speech is official or private." She confirmed that public officials maintain rights in their private lives, stating, "State officials have private lives and their own constitutional rights."



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