

How to reply to a 1-star review as a health brand



A public reply that confirms someone is a patient, or mentions their treatment, can disclose protected health information. Reply to the review, not to the person.

Why it matters. In 2023 the HHS Office for Civil Rights settled with a provider for \$30,000 after it disclosed patient information in replies to negative online reviews.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "OCR agreement with a provider that disclosed patient information in response to negative online reviews", www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/compliance-enforcement/agreements/manasa/index.html · Last verified 2026-09-20

Never, in a public reply

- Confirm or deny that the writer is a patient, a customer or has an account.
- Mention a treatment, a prescription, a condition, an appointment or an order.
- Name a staff member, or repeat what the review says about one.
- Argue about what happened, or correct the writer's account of it.
- Offer anything in exchange for changing or removing the review.

Always

- Thank them for the feedback, in general terms.
- Talk about your process, not about them: "If you have an account with us, our team can look into it."
- Offer a private route: the contact page or the support email, never a personal number.
- Have a second person read any reply you change.

A reply that confirms nothing (a late delivery, on Google)

We are sorry this went wrong. Thank you for the feedback. Waiting longer than you were told is a real problem and we do not want it to be anyone's experience. If you have an order with us, our team can look into where it sat and what caused the delay. The fastest route is to contact us directly with the order reference. We have been through our dispatch times for this period and are fixing what we found. You can reach us through the contact page on our website.

A short one (a billing complaint, on Trustpilot)

We are sorry this went wrong. Thank you for raising this. A charge that is not expected is worth sorting out properly, and we would like the chance to. If you have an account with us, our team can check the billing history on it and explain or correct anything that looks wrong. You can reach us through the contact details on our Trustpilot profile.

Hand it up the line when

- The review contains a threat: safety first, then your manager.
- It names or describes a staff member: tell your manager, and the person named, the same day.
- It accuses the business of a crime or threatens legal action: do not reply. Pass it to the owner, who decides whether counsel sees it.
- You think it breaks a platform rule: note which one and pass it to whoever files reports.

More replies, all written to confirm nothing: removeonestar.com/tools/review-response-generator · Staff guidance and templates: removeonestar.com/resources/templates