



# Information for Law Enforcement Authorities

## About WhatsApp

WhatsApp provides messaging, Internet calling, and other services to users around the world. You can learn more about WhatsApp by visiting our [Help Center](#).

WhatsApp appreciates the work that law enforcement agencies do to keep people safe around the world. We are prepared to carefully review, validate and respond to law enforcement requests based on applicable law and policy.

The following operational guidelines are for law enforcement officials seeking records from WhatsApp.

## Responding to Law Enforcement Requests

In addition to this guide, law enforcement officials may also contact WhatsApp with questions or in emergency situations (as detailed below). To ensure a timely response, please do not send law enforcement inquiries to WhatsApp Support or any other channel not intended for law enforcement.

## U.S. Legal Process Requirements

We disclose account records solely in accordance with our terms of service and applicable law, including the federal Stored Communications Act ("SCA"), 18 U.S.C. Sections 2701-2712. Under US law:

- A valid subpoena issued in connection with an official criminal investigation is required to compel the disclosure of basic subscriber records (defined in 18 U.S.C. Section 2703(c)(2)), which may include (if available): name, service start date, last seen date, IP address, and email address.
- A court order issued under 18 U.S.C. Section 2703(d) is required to compel the disclosure of certain records or other information pertaining to the account, not including contents of communications, which may include numbers blocking or blocked by the user, in addition to the basic subscriber records identified above.
- A search warrant issued under the procedures described in the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure or equivalent state warrant procedures upon a showing of probable cause is required to compel the disclosure of the stored contents of any account, which may include "about" information, profile photos, group information, and address book, if available. WhatsApp does not store messages once they are delivered or transaction logs of such delivered messages, and undelivered messages are deleted from our servers after 30 days. WhatsApp offers end-to-end encryption for our services, which is on by default.
- We interpret the national security letter provision as applied to WhatsApp to require the production of only 2 categories of information: name and length of service.

## **International Legal Process Requirements**

We disclose account records solely in accordance with our terms of service and applicable law. A Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty request or letter rogatory may be required to compel the disclosure of the contents of an account.

## **Account Preservation**

We will take steps to preserve account records in connection with official criminal investigations for 90 days pending our receipt of formal legal process. You may expeditiously submit formal preservation requests via email or mail as indicated below.

## **Emergency Requests**

In responding to a matter involving imminent harm to a child or risk of death or serious physical injury to any person and requiring disclosure of information without delay, a law enforcement official may submit a request via email. For expedited processing of such requests, we recommend including the word "EMERGENCY" in the subject line of your message.

Note: We will not review or respond to requests submitted by non-law enforcement officials. Please submit emergency requests from an official government-issued email address. Users aware of an emergency situation should immediately contact their local law enforcement directly.

Download WhatsApp's Emergency Disclosure Request [[here](#)].

## **Child Safety Matters**

We report all apparent instances of child exploitation appearing on our service from anywhere in the world to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), including content drawn to our attention by government requests. NCMEC coordinates with the International Center for Missing and Exploited Children and law enforcement authorities from around the world. If a request relates to a child exploitation or safety matter, please specify those circumstances in the request (and include relevant NCMEC report identifiers) to ensure that we are able to address these matters expeditiously and effectively.

## **Data Retention and Availability**

We will search for and disclose information that is specified with particularity in an appropriate form of legal process and which we are reasonably able to locate and retrieve. We do not retain data for law enforcement purposes unless we receive a valid preservation request before a user has deleted that content from our service.

WhatsApp does not store messages once they are delivered or transaction logs of such delivered messages, and undelivered messages are deleted from our servers after 30 days. We also offer end-to-end encryption for our services, which is on by default. End-to-end encryption means that messages are encrypted to protect against us and third parties from reading them. Additional information about WhatsApp's security can be found [here](#).

## **Form of Requests**

We will be unable to process overly broad or vague requests. All requests must identify requested records with particularity and include the following:

- The name of the issuing authority, badge/ID number of responsible agent, email address from a law enforcement domain, and direct contact phone number.
- The WhatsApp account number (including any applicable country codes; more information about country codes is available [here](#)).

## **Testimony**

WhatsApp does not provide expert testimony support. In addition, WhatsApp records are self-authenticating pursuant to law and should not require the testimony of a records custodian. If a special form of certification is required, please attach it to your records request.

## **Cost Reimbursement**

We may seek reimbursement for costs in responding to requests for information as provided by law. These fees apply on a per account basis. We may also charge additional fees for costs incurred in responding to unusual or burdensome requests. We may waive these fees in matters investigating potential harm to children, WhatsApp and our users, and emergency requests.

## **Submission of Requests**

### **Email**

Law enforcement officials should send a request from an official government-issued email address to [WhatsAppLEC@subpoenasolutions.com](mailto:WhatsAppLEC@subpoenasolutions.com). Law enforcement agents who are unable to include the legal process in an email may notify us via email of their limitations so we may coordinate service of process.

### **Mail**

Mailing address:

WhatsApp Inc.  
1601 Willow Road  
Menlo Park, California 94025  
United States of America

Attention: WhatsApp Inc., Law Enforcement Response Team

Law enforcement officials who do not submit requests via email should expect longer response times. Sending process both electronically and via hard copy may also increase processing time.

### **Notes**

- Acceptance of legal process by any of these means is for convenience and does not waive any objections, including lack of jurisdiction or proper service.
- We will not respond to correspondence sent by non-law enforcement officials to the addresses above.

## **Updates to The Guidelines**

WhatsApp may update this information periodically. Please consult the guidelines before making any request.