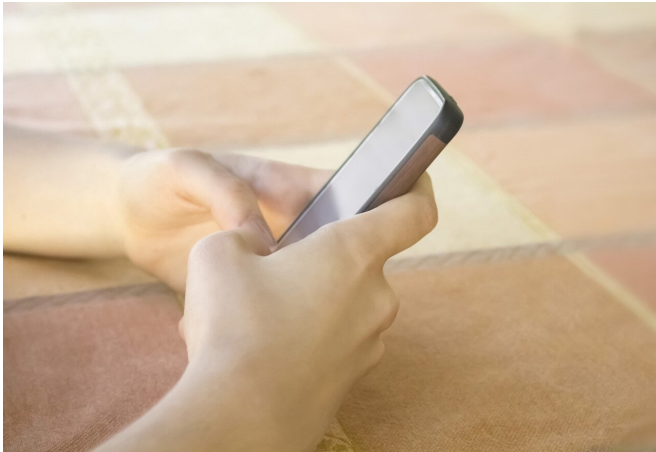


The U.S. Navy banned TikTok from government-issued smartphones over cybersecurity concerns

23 December 2019, by Dalvin Brown, Usa Today



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The U.S. Navy thinks TikTok is a threat to national cybersecurity.

On Wednesday, the Navy sent out an alert on Facebook urging [military personnel](#) and staff to delete the app if they have it downloaded on government-issued smartphones and tablets. The alert also urged them not to download the app on government-supplied devices in the first place.

"This decision was made based on cybersecurity threat assessments, and is consistent with 10th Fleet efforts to proactively address existing and emerging threats in defense of our networks," said Dave Benham, director of public affairs for U.S. Fleet Cyber Command in a statement to *USA TODAY*.

The Navy didn't elaborate on what specific cybersecurity dangers the app poses. *USA TODAY* reached out to TikTok for comment.

A Navy spokesperson told Reuters that [social media apps](#) are generally allowed on internet-connected devices paid for by the government. But those apps are banned internally when they are deemed unsafe.

Military personnel can still use social networking apps and TikTok on their personal devices if they choose to, but not on iPhones or iPads bought by the government.

The bulletin posted on Facebook arrives as Capitol Hill increasingly worries about the Chinese-run app's popularity in the states. The short-form video application that's used mostly by teens is owned by Beijing-based ByteDance and boasts more than 110 million downloads in the U.S.

On the app, people share short, highly-edited videos that are often set to music. TikTok says it doesn't send any user-collected data to China.

In October, two senators sent a request to [intelligence officials](#) to investigate the possible counterintelligence risks posed by TikTok.

In the letter spearheaded by Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y. and Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., the platform is referred to as "a potential target of foreign influence campaigns like those carried out during the 2016 election on U.S.-based social media platforms."

And in November, the government opened a national security review of Musical.ly, the American company that became TikTok after ByteDance bought it, Reuters reports.

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