



Commonwealth of Virginia  
Office of the Governor

## Executive Order

NUMBER 24 (2022)

### BANNING THE USE OF CERTAIN APPLICATIONS AND WEBSITES ON STATE GOVERNMENT TECHNOLOGY

#### **Importance of Initiative**

Safeguarding data and ensuring cybersecurity are increasingly important aspects of state government, as evidenced by the sensitive information held on state government servers, such as health records or tax information. Information technology infrastructure has become an integral part of the routine operations of state government and a critical component of serving the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Applications and websites such as TikTok and WeChat provide foreign governments, such as the Chinese Communist Party, with the potential to gain access to the information stored on mobile devices, including location services and browsing history.

As a result of the growing concern over foreign cybersecurity threats, the Department of Defense has already issued a directive to all service members to remove applications from their government-issued or owned devices. Further, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has expressed concerns about applications that could be used by the Chinese government to control software or data collection on devices that would compromise sensitive or personal information.

#### **Directive**

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority vested in me in Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and as the Chief Executive of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to § 2.2-103 of the *Code of Virginia*, I hereby direct and order that no employee of any agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia shall download or use TikTok or WeChat applications or any other applications developed by ByteDance Limited or Tencent Holdings Limited or visit the TikTok or WeChat website on any government-issued devices, including state-issued cell phones, laptops, or other devices capable of connecting to the internet except for public safety purposes.

Further, no person or entity contracting with the Commonwealth, including but not limited to all agencies, boards, commissions, institutions of higher education, or authorities, or agents thereof, may download or use TikTok or WeChat applications or any other application developed by ByteDance Limited or Tencent Holdings Limited, or visit the TikTok or WeChat websites on state-owned or leased equipment.

Any employee of the Commonwealth, or person or entity contracting with the Commonwealth, who has already downloaded TikTok or WeChat applications or any other applications developed by ByteDance Limited or Tencent Holdings Limited to any government-issued devices as listed above are hereby directed to remove, delete, and uninstall these applications by December 31, 2022.

### **Additional Directive**

No person shall access TikTok or WeChat or any other application developed by ByteDance Limited or Tencent Holdings Limited through Commonwealth owned, operated, or maintained wireless network.

This applies to all Executive Offices, Secretariat Offices and Executive Branch Agencies under Virginia Information Technologies Agency. Other units or entities of state government shall comply with this directive in the manner which best suits their information technology capability and network security needs.

Accordingly, the Virginia Information Technologies Agency is directed to restrict access to these websites and applications in accordance with this Executive Order.

An authorized information technology officer or chief administrative officer for all Executive Branch Agencies shall send written confirmation and report of compliance with this directive to the Secretary of Administration by January 15, 2023.

### **Effective Date of the Executive Order**

This Executive Order shall be effective upon its signing and shall remain in force and effect unless amended or rescinded by further executive order or directive. Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2022.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Glenn Youngkin".

Glenn Youngkin, Governor

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kay Coles James".

Kay Coles James, Secretary of the Commonwealth