

# BRAZORIA COUNTY

## Covered Applications Policy

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 PURPOSE

On December 7, 2022, Governor Greg Abbott required all state agencies to ban the video-sharing application TikTok from all state-owned and state-issued devices and networks over the Chinese Communist Party's ability to use the application for surveilling Texans. Following the issuance of the Governor's directive, the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed [Senate Bill 1893](#), which prohibits the use of covered applications on governmental entity devices.

As required by Senate Bill 1893, this policy prohibits the installation or use of covered applications or prohibited technologies on applicable devices.

## 2.0 COVERED APPLICATIONS POLICY FOR BRAZORIA COUNTY

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### 2.1 SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

Pursuant to Senate Bill 1893, governmental entities, including counties, must establish a covered applications policy.

This policy applies to all Brazoria County full- and part-time employees, contractors, paid or unpaid interns, and other users of County networks. All Brazoria County employees and network users are responsible for complying with this policy.

A covered application is:

- The social media service TikTok or any successor application or service developed or provided by ByteDance Limited, or an entity owned by ByteDance Limited.
- A social media application or service specified by proclamation of the governor under Government Code Section 620.005.
- Software, applications, or developers as identified by the Texas Department of Information Resources, as updated from time to time.

## **2.2 COVERED APPLICATIONS ON GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR LEASED DEVICES**

Except where approved exceptions apply, the use or installation of covered applications is prohibited on all county-owned or -leased devices, including cell phones, tablets, desktop and laptop computers, and other internet-capable devices.

Brazoria County will identify, track, and manage all county-owned or -leased devices including mobile phones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, or any other internet-capable devices to:

- a. Prohibit the installation of a covered application.
- b. Prohibit the use of a covered application.
- c. Remove a covered application from a government-owned or -leased device that was on the device prior to the passage of S.B. 1893 (88th Leg, R.S.).
- d. Remove an application from a government-owned or -leased device if the Governor issues a proclamation identifying it as a covered application.

Brazoria County will manage all government-owned or leased devices by implementing the security measures listed below:

- a. Restrict access to "app stores" or unauthorized software repositories to prevent the installation of unauthorized applications.
- b. Maintain the ability to remotely wipe non-compliant or compromised devices.
- c. Maintain the ability to remotely uninstall unauthorized software from devices.

## **2.3 ONGOING AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGY THREATS**

To provide protection against ongoing and emerging technological threats to the government's sensitive information and critical infrastructure, DPS and DIR will regularly monitor and evaluate additional social media applications or services that pose a risk to this state.

DIR will annually submit to the Governor a list of social media applications and services identified as posing a risk to Texas. The Governor may proclaim items on this list as covered applications that are subject to this policy.

If the Governor identifies an item on the DIR-posted list described by this section, then Brazoria County will remove and prohibit the covered application.

Brazoria County may prohibit social media applications or services in addition to those specified by proclamation of the Governor.

## **2.4 USE OF PERSONAL DEVICES**

Brazoria County allows the use of approved personal devices to conduct county business in certain situations. In no event should a personal device be used to conduct county business related to a state agency or that requires access to a state database.

## **2.5 COVERED APPLICATION EXCEPTIONS**

Brazoria County may permit exceptions authorizing the installation and use of a covered application on county-owned or -leased devices consistent with the authority provided by Government Code Chapter 620.

Government Code Section 620.004 only allows Brazoria County to install and use a covered application on an applicable device to the extent necessary for:

- (1) Providing law enforcement; or
- (2) Developing or implementing information security measures.

If Brazoria County authorizes an exception under this section allowing for the installation and use of a covered application, Brazoria County must use measures to mitigate the risks posed to the state during the application's use.

Brazoria County must document whichever measures it took to mitigate the risks posed to the state during the use of the covered application.

A county employee may not install or use a covered application on a county-owned or leased device without approval from their department head or elected official and Information Services.

## **3.0 POLICY COMPLIANCE**

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All Brazoria County employees shall sign a document annually confirming their understanding of the Covered Applications Policy.

Brazoria County will verify compliance with this policy through various methods, including but not limited to, IS/security system reports and feedback to leadership.

An employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

## **4.0 POLICY REVIEW**

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This policy will be reviewed every two years and updated as necessary to reflect changes in state law, additions to applications identified under Government Code Section 620.006, updates to the prohibited technology list posted to DIR's website, or to suit the needs of Brazoria County.

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