

Corona warning app is available for download

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Covid-19

CWA

The Corona-Warn-App (CWA) aims to curb the spread of Covid-19 infections. The idea behind this is that chains of infection can be more easily detected and broken. For this purpose, the Corona-Warn-App informs users by notification if they have been in the vicinity of another person infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus for a certain period of time in the past and this infected person spread their infection in the CWA has deposited.

Since the first thoughts on such an app were published, the data protection supervisory authorities have emphatically advocated that such an app must always be based on a strict voluntary basis and that there should be no obligation to install this app on one's own smartphone. The sole purpose must also be the detection of potential infection contacts for the user himself. Government agencies must never have access to the data on the smartphone of the user of the Corona-Warn-App. The Hamburg Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (HmbBfDI) is convinced that only with the greatest possible transparency and comprehensible data collection will a large proportion of the population use such an app. On the technical side, the political decision to design a completely decentralized app and to dispense with central storage of data contributes in particular to this. The actual comparison of the known infected persons is also carried out on the individual smartphones with as little data as possible and not on a central server. The HmbBfDI observed with concern the initial considerations to push for a central model despite reservations from science and the informed public.

The political decision to oblige the manufacturers of the app - SAP and Deutsche Telekom - to open-source development of the Corona-Warn-App is expressly welcomed and understood as a model for future transparent public administration projects. This gives independent organizations the opportunity to analyze the concept and implementation, to critically question manufacturer information and to ensure that the interests of those affected are fully taken into account. The HmbBfDI, like the Federal Commissioner for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (BfDI), assumes that the companies involved will

address open issues and any (security) gaps that may arise as quickly as possible in order to protect the data of citizens.

In addition, the HmbBfDI supports the demand currently under discussion for a legal regulation with precise differentiation of the respective powers, which would further increase the acceptance of the Corona-Warn-App.

Johannes Caspar, Hamburg's representative for data protection and freedom of information: "The app is a modern tool for detecting and preventing chains of infection. The intensive discussion about the concept of the Corona Warn app has delayed the app's availability. However, it was worth waiting: Politicians recognized that use was voluntary and the technical concept was changed in such a way that data protection can be guaranteed in an exemplary manner. Nevertheless, a special legal regulation could have protected against the app being required in everyday life as a prerequisite for certain activities. The voluntariness must not be restricted by making access to certain places or facilities dependent on whether the Corona-Warn-App is used. As far as the scope of the data protection law extends, possible abuses of the voluntariness are a matter for the independent data protection supervisory authorities. Data protection violations can then lead to severe fines. In due course, an evaluation should also be carried out to determine whether such a tracing app can support the goal of breaking chains of infection at an early stage."

The HmbBfDI would also like to point out

to the information from the federal governments on false reports in the context of the CWA,

the list of questions from the consumer advice centre,

as well as the press release of the BfDI.

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