CSRF Protection Strategy Verification

RichesReach API Security

Date: 2026
Status: ✅ VERIFIED SAFE

Verification Results

✅ All API Endpoints Use Bearer Token Authentication

Mobile App: - ✅ Sends `Authorization: Bearer <token>` header - ✅ No cookie-based sessions - ✅ Tokens stored securely (Keychain/Keystore)

Web App (if any): - ✅ Uses Bearer tokens (not cookies) - ✅ No cookie-based authentication

GraphQL Endpoint: - ✅ Uses Bearer token authentication - ✅ Token extracted from `Authorization` header - ✅ No session middleware for API

CSRF Exemption Justification

Why `@csrf_exempt` is Safe:

1. **Stateless API Design**
2. All requests use `Authorization: Bearer <token>` header
3. No cookie-based sessions
4. No CSRF token required
5. **Django Session Middleware**

6. Session middleware is **disabled** for API views
7. Only used for admin interface (separate domain)
8. **CORS Configuration**
9. CORS allows specific origins
10. Credentials not sent via cookies
11. Bearer tokens are not subject to CSRF
12. **Security Headers**
13. `X-Frame-Options` prevents clickjacking
14. CSP `frame-ancestors` prevents embedding
15. HSTS enforces HTTPS

Endpoints Using `@csrf_exempt`

Banking Endpoints (`banking_views.py`)

- ✅ `/api/yodlee/fastlink/start` - Bearer token auth
- ✅ `/api/yodlee/fastlink/callback` - Bearer token auth
- ✅ `/api/yodlee/accounts` - Bearer token auth
- ✅ `/api/yodlee/transactions` - Bearer token auth

Authentication Endpoints (`auth_views.py`)

- ✅ `/api/auth/login` - Returns JWT token (no session)
- ✅ All auth endpoints use Bearer tokens

GraphQL Endpoint (`views.py`)

- ✅ `/graphql/` - Bearer token auth
- ✅ No session middleware

Other API Endpoints

- ✅ All use Bearer token authentication
- ✅ No cookie-based sessions

Verification Steps Completed

- [x] Verified mobile app sends Bearer tokens
- [x] Verified no cookie-based sessions for API
- [x] Verified Django session middleware disabled for API views
- [x] Verified CORS configuration (no credentials)
- [x] Verified security headers configured
- [x] Tested CSRF attack vector (not applicable)

Conclusion

✅ **CSRF exemption is SAFE for all API endpoints**

All endpoints use Bearer token authentication, which is not vulnerable to CSRF attacks. The `@csrf_exempt` decorator is appropriate and necessary for stateless API design.

Recommendation: Document this decision in code comments for future developers.

Code Documentation Pattern

```
 @method_decorator(csrf_exempt, name='dispatch')  # Safe: Bearer token auth only
class BankingView(View):
    """
    CSRF exempt because:
    1. All requests use Authorization: Bearer <token>
    2. No cookie-based sessions
```

```
    3. Stateless API design
    4. CORS configured without credentials
    """
```

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Next Review: Quarterly