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### Use external service providers carefully

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Data security plans should provide policies and procedures for use of outside parties for data storage, communications, and processing functions. The plans should identify the situations under which such outside data service providers can be used and the categories of data that can be processed using those service providers. They should ensure that the data security measures applied by the service providers are adequate to meet the organizations data security plan and all applicable legal and regulatory requirements associated with the data.

The performance records and service offerings of all data service providers should be carefully reviewed in advance. Terms of service and service agreements with data service providers should include legally enforceable provisions related to key data security topics. Those critical topics include:

- description of security measures and security level commitments;
- procedures for handling security breaches;
- notice to be provided in the event of security breaches and demands for data disclosure made by government authorities;
- processes for handling service outages;
- ownership of and rights of access to stored data

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