

Third Party Might Hack Alleged San Bernardino Shooter's iPhone for Apple

Summary: A mysterious third party may be able to hack into the alleged San Bernardino shooter's iPhone.

A mysterious third party has come forward, possibly offering a solution to the legal battle between Apple and the U.S. government.

To recap, the federal government sued Apple for refusing to help the FBI break into the iPhone of the alleged San Bernardino shooter, Syed Farook. Apple issued a public statement saying that to do so would undermine decades of security advancements and would compromise the security of millions of iPhone users. For the past month, the two parties have been in a legal battle while the investigation has seemingly stalled.

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Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik. Photo courtesy of LA Times. [/caption]

But **ABC News** reports that the battle may end thanks to the third party, which authorities have not identified but said “demonstrated” a “possible method” that could crack a locked iPhone. Because of the third party, the U.S. government postponed a court hearing scheduled today.

Law enforcement officials did not share what the “possible method” entailed, but the U.S. Department of Justice said in a statement yesterday that the FBI is continuing its effort to break the phone, despite its litigation with Apple. They are “cautiously optimistic” and plan to do a test the method to make sure it does not do damage to the data on the phone.

Mark Bartholomew, a law professor at the University of Buffalo, told ABC News that if the third party can break Farook's phone this would be a win for Apple.

“It is definitely a legal win for Apple if this case goes away because some other party can go ahead and get into the phone,” Bartholomew said. “A lot of their argument was, ‘It isn’t fair to compel our engineers to write this code.’”

For Apple, they believe someone uncovering a backdoor is inevitable, which is why they fight to work to stay one step ahead of cybercriminals. CEO Tim Cook said at a recent iPhone SE launch event that it is the company's responsibility to keep its customers' data and privacy safe and that he never expected the company to be “at odds with our own government.”

Hopefully, the third party will end this fight.

Source: **ABC News**