

The Latest: Apple not claiming win in iPhone dispute

March 22 2016



In this April 30, 2015 file photo, Apple CEO Tim Cook responds to a question during a news conference at IBM Watson headquarters, in New York. The dispute over whether Apple must help the FBI hack into a terror suspect's iPhone is about to play out in a Southern California courtroom. The hearing Tuesday, March 22, in U.S. District Court in Riverside is the first in the battle that has seen Cook and FBI Director James Comey spar over issues of privacy and national security. (AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

The Latest on the FBI's efforts to unlock an iPhone used by one of the

San Bernardino, California, attackers (all times local):

6:30 p.m.

Apple says it's premature to declare victory in the company's dispute with the [government](#) because it's possible that authorities could come back in a few weeks and insist they still need Apple's help.

Attorneys for the tech company also told reporters that Apple has no idea what method the FBI is now exploring to try unlocking the encrypted iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino mass shooters. The attorneys spoke under an Apple policy that wouldn't allow them to be quoted by name.

While the company is hoping the government will tell Apple about whatever method they use to access the phone's encrypted files, the attorneys said it may be up to the FBI to decide whether to share the information.

—Information from Associated Press writer Brandon Bailey in San Francisco

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5:30 p.m.

An ACLU attorney says that if the government has an alternative solution to unlocking the iPhone, that development would severely undercut its effort to order Apple's assistance.

ACLU staff attorney Alex Abdo, who helped prepare a legal brief supporting Apple in the case, says the law that the government is citing, known as the All Writs Act, requires that there be a strong necessity for

the requested assistance.



This Feb. 17, 2016 file photo shows an iPhone in Washington. The dispute over whether Apple must help the FBI hack into a terror suspect's iPhone is about to play out in a Southern California courtroom. The hearing Tuesday, March 22, in U.S. District Court in Riverside is the first in the battle that has seen Cook and FBI Director James Comey spar over issues of privacy and national security. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster,File)

Abdo also says it's possible that the solution has been proposed by an intelligence agency or a private contractor that the government asked for help. Experts have previously suggested that the iPhone's auto-erase function could be surmounted by making a copy of the phone's flash memory. But that was raised as a possible solution three weeks ago, and the FBI has continued to say that Apple is the only party available to help

unlock the phone.

5 p.m.

A federal prosecutor's spokesman says a much-anticipated hearing over the FBI's demand that Apple help unlock an iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino attackers has been canceled.

Thom Mrozek, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office, says Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym on Monday granted the government's request to delay the hearing, which had been set for Tuesday.

He says Pym ordered the government to file a status report by April 5.

In a filing late Monday, [federal prosecutors](#) said "an outside party" has come forward and shown the FBI a possible method for unlocking the phone used by one of the shooters in the Dec. 2 terror attack. Authorities say they need time to determine if the method will work without compromising data on the phone.

If the method works, the government said, it would eliminate the need for Apple's assistance. Apple has fought the court order, saying the government's demand for assistance would make other iPhones vulnerable.

4 p.m.

Federal authorities have asked to hold off on a much-anticipated court hearing set for Tuesday over the FBI's demand for Apple to help unlock

an encrypted iPhone used by one of the San Bernardino attackers.

In a filing late Monday, federal prosecutors said "an outside party" has come forward and shown the FBI a possible method for unlocking the phone used by one of the shooters in the Dec. 2 terror attack. Authorities say they need time to determine if the method will work without compromising data on the phone.

If the method works, the government said, it would eliminate the need for Apple's assistance. Apple has fought the court order, saying the government's demand for assistance would make other iPhones vulnerable.

In a statement, U.S. Justice Department spokeswoman Melanie Newman says the government is "cautiously optimistic" that the possible method will work.

2:15 p.m.

The dispute over whether Apple must help the FBI hack into a dead San Bernardino attacker's iPhone is about to play out in a Southern California courtroom.

The hearing Tuesday in U.S. District Court in Riverside is the first in the battle that has seen Apple CEO Tim Cook and FBI Director James Comey spar over issues of privacy and national security.

The case is likely to set a precedent regarding whether technology companies must assist law enforcement.

A magistrate judge sided last month with the FBI. The agency wants

Apple to help it crack the iPhone passcode for the gunman in the Dec. 2 attacks that killed 14 people.

Apple says doing so would tarnish its brand and threaten the trust its customers have about the security of their personal information.

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