

US judge rejects Kaspersky suit against govt ban on its products

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Eugene Kaspersky, CEO of Kaspersky Lab, denies ties to the Russian government

A Washington judge on Wednesday rejected a lawsuit by Russian computer security company Kaspersky Lab against the ban on use of its

anti-virus software by government agencies.

Kaspersky had complained that the ban—announced after officials said Russian intelligence was able to hack the [software](#) for espionage purposes—was in effect a "punishment" of the company without it having given it any kind of hearing.

Federal court judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly rejected the argument, saying the US [government](#) had the right to institute the ban to defend its computer security.

The ban "does not inflict 'punishment' on Kaspersky Lab," Kollar-Kotelly said in her ruling.

"It eliminates a perceived risk to the nation's cybersecurity and, in so doing, has the secondary effect of foreclosing one small source of revenue for a large multinational corporation," she said.

She also rejected the global cybersecurity giant's complaint that it had been illegally denied the "right" to sell a product that is legal, and that the ban harmed its reputation.

While the company can still market its products, she said, the government has no obligation to buy them.

In addition, she said, as the ban is legal and will remain in place, nothing can be done about any harm to its reputation.

The ban began with a directive in September 2017 from the Department of Homeland Security for [government agencies](#) to remove Kaspersky software from their computing systems.

That has since been followed by a provision set by Congress in a budget

bill prohibiting agencies from using Kaspersky software.

Both came after the National Security Agency, the US signals intelligence body, determined that Kaspersky software on an NSA employee's private computer allowed hackers, believed to be from Russian intelligence, to steal top secret NSA materials.

US officials have also expressed concern about alleged ties between Kaspersky and the Russian government, which the company denies.

The impact on the company has been heavy. Most US companies have moved to stop using its software, and most major stores have stopped selling it.

While the private [company](#) does not report its earnings, sales internationally have also reportedly been hurt.

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