

Dropbox Law Enforcement Handbook

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About

Law Enforcement Handbook

This handbook is for law enforcement seeking information from Dropbox in a criminal investigation. For more information on Dropbox's philosophy on user data, please refer to our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Government Data Request Principles](#). This handbook does not create any obligations concerning how Dropbox will respond in any particular case. Dropbox reserves the right to charge reasonable reimbursement fees for responding to law enforcement information requests.

Dropbox

Dropbox is a file syncing and collaboration service that allows users to access and share their files on computers, phones, tablets, and the Dropbox website.

Sending Process to Dropbox

We accept service of legal process from law enforcement in one of the following ways:

Email: legalcompliance@dropbox.com

Please send all documents as PDF files. Please include the legal process number, or case number, in the subject line of your email. Please include a plain text file with the email address(es) and/or link(s) to ensure accuracy. We can only accept legal process sent from government domains.

Mail: CSC - Lawyers Incorporating Service
2710 Gateway Oaks Dr., Ste. 150N
Sacramento, CA 95833

Fax: Dropbox does not accept service of legal process by fax.

For all forms of service, please ensure our physical address is listed in the legal process:

Dropbox, Inc.
333 Brannan Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

While we agree to accept service of law enforcement requests by these methods, neither Dropbox nor our users waive any legal rights based on this accommodation.

Requests seeking in-person testimony must be personally served on our registered agent for service of process (CSC, listed above) and should identify "Dropbox Custodian of Records" rather than an individual Dropbox employee. We do not accept those requests by email, mail, fax, or personal service at the Dropbox office. Because our resources are limited, we will only consider requests for in-person testimony when a certificate of business records is insufficient. In any event, we request at least 4 weeks' notice for these requests.

Emergency Requests

If you are seeking information in emergency circumstances, please contact us at legalcompliance@dropbox.com with "Emergency Request" included in the subject, and provide the basis upon which you are making the request. We will endeavor to process these requests on an expedited basis.

User Notice Policy

Dropbox's policy is to provide notice to users about all law enforcement requests for their information prior to complying with the request, unless prohibited by law. We might delay notice in cases involving the threat of death or bodily injury, or the exploitation of children. If you have a legal basis to delay Dropbox from notifying the user in a particular case, please provide legal justification (such as a court order) when serving the subpoena or warrant. Once the basis for the non-disclosure has expired, we will give notice to the user.

Requests for User Information

For requests of any kind, we ask that you provide your mailing address, email address, and direct phone and fax numbers upon first contact or service of legal process. Please note that we are unable to ship to P.O. Boxes.

User Identification

To identify an account, Dropbox typically requires the email address associated with the account. In some situations, Dropbox is able to identify a user by a sharing link created by that user.

Subscriber Information

The following information may be available in response to an enforceable government **subpoena or court order**:

1. The name provided by the user

2. The email address provided by the user
3. The phone number provided by the user
4. The length of service
5. The type of account and payment information
6. The IP addresses recorded for account logins
7. Computers linked to an account
8. Mobile devices linked to an account

Court Order for Non-Content

In addition to the information listed above, Dropbox may be able to provide additional non-content information in response to a **Court Order for Non-Content** pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2703(d), such as email address verification status and a log of actions without filenames taken within a Dropbox account.

Content

Dropbox will only provide user content, whether in files or otherwise, in response to a **search warrant**.

Due to technical constraints, we can **only** produce the content of a Dropbox account in response to a search warrant that requests a **complete** reconstruction of an account as of the date of warrant service or the date of a prior preservation request.

Dropbox cannot filter our responses to include only certain file types. For example, we cannot produce content in response to warrant language requesting “all images and videos.”

Dropbox also cannot filter our responses to include only files on a single date or during a specific time period. For example, we cannot produce content in response to warrant language requesting “all files uploaded between DATE1 and DATE2.” By default, we produce the state of a Dropbox account as it was on the day we process the warrant, unless the search warrant specifically requests content pursuant to a previous preservation request.

In order to limit the scope of a search such as in the examples provided above, we recommend dividing your warrant into two pieces: (1) Dropbox’s production and (2) law enforcement’s search. Part (1) should request that Dropbox produce all content within the Dropbox account in question (without limitation). Part (2) should define the scope of law enforcement’s search, as appropriate given the specifics of the investigation, the probable cause standard, and other applicable laws.

Data Retention Policy

Subscriber information is available while an account is active. Deleted files in an active account will typically still be available for 30 days after deletion. In cases where a user has taken deliberate action to permanently delete content, Dropbox may be unable to recover that content even within the 30-day window. For more information, please see this [help center article](#).

When a user disables an account, subscriber information and the content in the account will be unrecoverable after 30 days unless the account is preserved.

Preservation Requests

We accept domestic and international requests to preserve records pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2703(f). All preservation and extension requests must include the date of the request and be made on official law enforcement letterhead.

When a preservation request has been received, Dropbox will preserve a one-time snapshot of the user data available at the time of the request for 90 days. After this 90-day period the preservation will be automatically removed, but extensions may be requested.

By default, Dropbox produces information in response to legal process based on the data available at the time the legal process is received and processed. If you are seeking previously-preserved data, your legal process must specifically identify the preservation.

Child Sexual Exploitation

If we have reason to believe that our production in response to a search warrant contains content that violates 18 U.S.C. § 2252/2252A or any similar statute or code, we can ship the production to destinations in California. For other destinations, the warrant must contain language directing Dropbox to ship our production to that destination. Below is exemplar language that can be used in legal process:

Notwithstanding 18 U.S.C. § 2252/2252A or any similar statute or code, Dropbox, Inc. shall disclose responsive data by sending it to [address] or via email to [email address].¹

¹ We are not always able to produce data via email; please always include a physical address.

Alternatively, we are willing to produce our response to local law enforcement who will physically take custody of the production at our offices on behalf of the serving officer or agent. We can currently facilitate these transfers at our San Francisco office.

Non-United States Requests

Dropbox is headquartered in, and offers its services from, the United States of America.

If you would like to obtain information from Dropbox, please follow the applicable mutual legal assistance treaty process or letters rogatory process so that a U.S. court may issue the required U.S. legal process to Dropbox. Should you have questions regarding these procedures, you may wish to contact the Office of International Affairs at the United States Department of Justice.

While we understand that some companies provide registration information without requiring a U.S. court order, Dropbox is not able to do so at this time. For the foreseeable future, we will require such an order.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I determine if a certain Dropbox account exists?

We will disclose whether a Dropbox account exists only in response to a subpoena, court order, or search warrant.

Is it possible for two people to be logged into a Dropbox account at the same time?

Each Dropbox account is associated with a single email address at any given point. If a user were to share login information for an account, more than one person could plausibly take actions in the Dropbox account at the same time, but would all appear as the same user to Dropbox.

Which IP address records are available?

Dropbox maintains IP addresses for web-based logins/authentications and the last-seen IP address of linked computers and mobile devices. Authentication IP address information is typically maintained for up to 2 years. IP addresses of specific actions within a Dropbox account, such as uploads and deletions, are not available.

How can a user access their account and not have an IP address recorded?

IP address login information is recorded when a user logs in to Dropbox through our website. Like many online services, Dropbox sometimes uses cookies stored on a browser so that a user may not need to sign in every time they visit the website. Additionally, if a user is accessing files in their Dropbox account from a desktop or mobile application, that access may not be logged by Dropbox.

Are all files in a Dropbox account uploaded by the account owner?

Not necessarily. If a Dropbox user is a member of a shared folder, then other members of the shared folder could also upload content. Also, if a user shares their login information (email and password), then other people could login and upload files. Finally, users can use the [file request](#) feature to receive files directly on their Dropbox from another person, even if that person doesn't have a Dropbox account.

I served Dropbox with legal process for a Dropbox account. Can I have information about a different account I believe belongs to the same person?

No. We're not able to give out any information about an account absent appropriate and valid legal process identifying that account.

How do I request that Dropbox disable an account that contains content showing child sexual exploitation?

If you have investigated and can confirm that an account contains child sexual exploitation content, we'll review, disable, and report the account to NCMEC. To have an account reviewed by our content safety team, email legalcompliance@dropbox.com with either the Dropbox link(s) generated by the account or the email address associated with the account.

I previously sent you a preservation request, why didn't I receive the preserved information in response to my subpoena/warrant?

In general, Dropbox produces the information available at the time the subpoena/warrant is processed. If you would like Dropbox to produce previously-preserved information, your warrant must specifically state this.

Does Dropbox store port number information?

No, Dropbox does not store port number information.