《手机APP实名制注册等新规开始实施》

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New regulations governing smartphone apps come into force today. Issued by the Cyberspace Administration, they require app providers operating in China to safeguard consumers’ personal information.

According to the regulations, app providers must verify users’ identities using cellphone numbers or other personal information. They should protect personal information and are forbidden from using it without prior consent from the user.

Providers should tighten censorship controls and impose punishments on anyone releasing illicit information, ranging from warnings and suspension of services to shutting down accounts.

Consumers must also be properly informed of their rights and providers are forbidden from accessing location information or personal contacts. The new regulations also ban app developers from pirating other companies' products.

The new regulations also allows providers to preserve users’ activity records for a maximum of two months. According to a report from the Internet Network Information Center, China had 688 million internet users at the end of 2015. Of those, more than 600 million surfed the net using cellphones.