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China Data Privacy Laws, Wechat Muddy Cross-Border Inquiries

Perkins Coie attorneys explain how China's new data security laws and use of third-party apps, such as WeChat, by Chinese employees create significant obstacles for companies conducting internal investigations in the country.

Foreign companies and their lawyers conducting internal investigations in China have long been aware of the challenges of collecting, storing, and reviewing data coming in and out of China.

The country is ramping up investment in technology and data, and passed two data privacy laws in 2021 as part of this effort—the Personal Information Protection Law and the Data Security Law.

This scrutiny presents significant new challenges that foreign companies and their lawyers with Chinese business interests must be aware of. One salient area of risk to monitor is business use of third-party messaging apps like WeChat.

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