



Practical Information

Signal for instant messaging: what you need to know

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What is Signal?

Signal is a **free instant messaging application** that enables users to chat, send audio messages, call and video call. The features of this applications are similar, and in some cases identical, to those that the typical instant messaging applications have. The app can be easily **downloaded** from either the [Google Play Store](#) (for **Android**) or the [Apple Store](#) (for **Apple devices**). The installation only takes a few minutes, and you will not be required to put any personal information except your phone number.

Why use Signal?

The ITCB (the Information Technology and Cybersecurity Board) is recommending **the use of Signal as a safer alternative for instant messaging**, for various reasons. The nature of this application is to support secured and private communication, without monetising on the users' data and/or private information. **Signal 'is run' by privacy advocates and cyber security experts** whose intent is to grant confidentiality, integrity and to keep users' data as safe as possible from private companies and big corporations.

In addition, differently from its peers apps, Signal's encryption protocol (the code it is made of), is **available under an open source license**, which means that it is publicly available for cybersecurity experts to test it, examine for potential holes, and can be independently audited.

Should I switch to Signal right now?

The sooner the better, but the adoption of Signal is not mandatory. ITCB recommends the **use of this public application for the exchange of public information and daily instant communication among colleagues as a transition until Skype for Business on Mobile (S4BM) will be out.**

Once the corporate S4BM for mobile devices will be available, it should be the application to use.

Exception: in case staff travel to foreign countries and/or the corporate solution is unavailable, Signal will remain a backup for all information that is classified as Public (PU), and must NOT be used for Sensitive Non Classified (SNC) information or above.