

IOS Spyware Stalkerware And Mobile Compromise

e-discovery.uk, Computer Forensics Lab. Published 2026-09-02.

<https://e-discovery.uk/library/ios-spyware-stalkerware-and-mobile-compromise>

SPYWARE, STALKERWARE & COMPROMISE · A GUIDE FOR UK LAWYERS
iOS Spyware, Stalkerware and Mobile Compromise
When the Phone Itself Is the Weapon: Detecting Covert Surveillance, and the Duty of Care It Demands
COMPUTER FORENSICS LAB
§ ABOUT THE AUTHOR
PREPARED BY COMPUTER FORENSICS LAB E-DISCOVERY TEAMS
SAFETY-LED, VICTIM-CENTRED APPROACH
CPR PART 35 EXPERT REPORT
FULL

CHAIN-OF-CUSTODY DOCUMENTATION
§ CONTENTS
In this guide

01 Executive summary
02 The problem in plain English: when the phone is the weapon
03 How iOS devices are covertly surveilled
04 Detecting compromise, and its limits
05 Safety first: the duty of care
06

07 Interpretation and honest limits
08 Deployment: protecting the person, then the evidence

09 Source architecture: where else the evidence lives
10 Worked examples
11 Common mistakes and technical limitations
12 Questions to ask · Suggested wording
13 Checklist and red flags ·

When to involve a digital forensic expert
14 Frequently asked questions
15 Glossary ·

References · Disclaimer · How a specialist laboratory can assist
§ 01 ·

ORIENTATION
Executive summary
surveilled through consumer stalkerware, the misuse of legitimate features like shared location and Find My, or rare sophisticated spyware, and this work carries an unusual duty of care, because victim safety comes

before evidence-gathering.
§ 02 · FIRST PRINCIPLE
The problem in plain English: when the phone is the weapon
§ 03 · HOW DEVICES ARE SURVEILLED
How iOS devices are covertly surveilled

STALKERWARE MISUSED FEATURES CONTROLLED SPYWARE (RARE) WIDER

VECTORS
ACCOUNTS
§ 04 · DETECTING COMPROMISE
Detecting compromise, and its limits
§ 05 ·

· SAFETY FIRST
Safety first: the duty of care
§ 06 ·

INTERPRETATION AND HONEST LIMITS
Interpretation and honest limits
§ 07 ·

DEPLOYMENT
Deployment: protecting the person, then the evidence
§ 08 ·

THE WIDER MAP
Source architecture: where else the evidence lives
EVIDENCE FAMILY

LINKED
THE ICLOUD PHYSICAL / SAFETYPHONE ACCOUNT NETWORK

CONSIDERATIONS
SHARING / PAIRED / SET UP DEVICES
§ 09 · IN THE WILD
Worked

examples
EXAMPLE 1 · THE " SPYWARE " THAT WAS A SHARED LOCATION
EXAMPLE 2 ·

SAFETY BEFORE THE SCAN
EXAMPLE 3 · THE CLEAN SCAN THAT WAS NOT A GUARANTEE
§ 10 ·

WHERE IT GOES WRONG
Common mistakes and technical limitations
Common mistakes
Technical

limitations
§ 11 · INTERROGATORIES & DRAFTING AIDS
Questions to ask · Suggested

wording
Ask your client
Ask the other side / in proceedings
Ask your e Discovery / forensic

provider
SUGGESTED WORDING · INSTRUCTION FOR A SUSPECTED - COMPROMISED ANALYSIS
§ 12 ·

QUICK CONTROL
Checklist and red flags · When to involve a digital

forensic expert
The suspected-compromise checklist
Red flags
When to involve a digital forensic

expert
§ 13 · COMMON QUESTIONS
Frequently asked questions
My client thinks their phone is

being tracked. Where do we start?
Is it usually sophisticated spyware?
Why can't you just scan

the phone and be sure?
Should we just remove any monitoring we find?
Can this evidence be

used in proceedings?
What if the abuser controls the Apple account?
§ 14 ·

REFERENCEGlossarySources and authoritative referencesDISCLAIMERS HOW A
SPECIALIST LABORATORY CAN ASSISTWorking with Computer Forensics LabSpeak to a
forensic examiner, not a salesperson.INSTRUCTTHELABNEWENQUIRIESEMAILE -
DISCOVERY

Questions and answers

My client thinks their phone is being tracked. Where do we start?

With their safety, before any exam in at i on (

Why can't you just scan the phone and be sure?

Because detection on iOS is genuinely limited (

Should we just remove any monitoring we find?

Not reflexively, because removal can escalate risk (

Source: <https://e-discovery.uk/library/ios-spyware-stalkerware-and-mobile-compromise>. Free to read and share with attribution to Computer Forensics Lab, e-discovery.uk.