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Uber Now Tracks Passengers' Locations Even After They're Dropped Off

December 1, 2016 Laura Roman

Uber's latest update allows the ride-hailing app to track user location data even when the application is running in the background. The change in location data gathering is quite apparent — after the update is completed, Uber prompts users to accept the new policy by enabling their phones to make the change.

Previously, Uber only collected data from the user if the rider had the application open. Now, if a rider calls for an Uber and closes the app, Uber says it will continue to collect location data up until five minutes after the ride ends. That means Uber can see where you end up after you leave the car.

So your secret rendezvous may not be so secret.

Uber now will be focused on collecting rider data, rather than just driver and trip data. "We do this to improve pickups, drop-offs, customer service, and to enhance safety," Uber says on its website.

Uber hopes to eliminate the most frustrating part of the experience: the game of phone tag that both the rider and driver play when trying to coordinate the pickup spot. By collecting location data when the ride is called, Uber can use the information gathered to gain a better sense of locations at large venues. Hopefully this will lead to less confusion when dropping a pin, or maybe it will improve the chance that users will be picked up on the correct side of the street. The update raises worries for privacy advocates.

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