T-Mobile appears to be blocking some iPhone users from turning on Private Relay

T-Mobile appears to be blocking some iPhone users from enabling iCloud Private Relay, a feature that lets you hide the websites you visit from third parties, according to a report from *9to5Mac*.

Private Relay is still in beta in iOS 15 and iPadOS 15, and it isn't turned on by default. You have to go into your iPhone's settings to switch it on, which is where some T-Mobile customers have noticed a strange message popping up. As shown in the above tweet, the user is presented with the message, "Your cellular plan doesn't support iCloud Private Relay. With Private Relay turned off, this network can monitor your internet activity, and your IP address is not hidden from known trackers or websites."

In a reply to that tweet, the user shows what happens when you click the "Learn More" button below the initial message – there, Apple explains why T-Mobile might be blocking the feature. "Networks that require the ability to audit traffic or perform network-based filtering will block access to Private Relay," it reads. "Your cellular provider may be providing network-based services, such as Parental Controls, requiring them to view the traffic on your network."

The VPN-like Private Relay hides your web activity from any outside sources – including Apple and your carrier – and prevents anyone from identifying you or the sites you access. It's currently available via a subscription to iCloud Plus.

According to *9to5Mac,* iPhone users in Europe were the first to notice that access to the Private Relay feature had been blocked. T-Mobile, Vodafone, and Telefonica added their names to an open letter published in *The Telegraph* that criticizes the feature. Carriers argue that Private Relay "will impair others to innovate and compete in downstream digital markets and may negatively impact operators' ability to efficiently manage telecommunication networks."

If you're a T-Mobile customer, you might not see the block on Private Relay just yet (it was still available on the T-Mobile iPhones we tested). It's currently unclear if this is intentional, if this will affect all T-Mobile customers, or if it is limited to certain plans. *The Verge* reached out to T-Mobile and Apple with a request for comment but didn't immediately hear back.

https://www.theverge.com/2022/1/10/22877211/t-mobile-iphone-private-relay-block