



Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative Privacy Policy Statement

Privacy is a fundamental right protected by the U.S. Constitution and expected by citizens. Protecting individual privacy is a fundamental responsibility of justice agencies that collect and share personally identifiable information. Privacy is not just the right to be left alone. Rather, privacy refers to the fair collection and use of personally identifiable information. Privacy policies articulate appropriate collection of and allowable uses for information, as well as provide accountability for misuse.

Privacy policies are an essential component of the successful operation and acceptance by the public and policymakers of any justice information sharing initiative. While many state, tribal, or local jurisdictions and agencies have policies and procedures that address the issue of privacy within their regular operating procedures, agencies should incorporate and adhere to a comprehensive privacy policy specific to justice information sharing. States are strongly encouraged to take a leadership role in this effort by providing assistance to local and tribal agencies in the development of statewide model privacy policies or policy development templates consistent with federal and state law. Comprehensive privacy policies serve as a fundamental lynchpin to developing a system of trust that allows agencies to share personally identifiable and other sensitive information. There needs to be trust not only within and between justice partners sharing information, but also by the public, whose information is being collected and utilized, that justice agencies are serving as responsible stewards of their personally identifiable information and operating with respect for individual privacy and the law. Without this trust, information sharing initiatives will not thrive and are ultimately doomed to public condemnation and civil liability.

The de facto privacy protection that existed in a paper-based justice system has all but vanished in the face of major technological advances in electronic records, information sharing, and search capabilities. **Developing an effective and comprehensive privacy policy helps to ensure that all stakeholders operate within the boundaries of local, state, and federal law and that all personally identifiable information is collected, stored, and shared in a lawful manner and in a safe and secure environment.** A comprehensive privacy policy must also address accountability for violations inclusive of consequences, remedies, and enforcement. The Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global) has prioritized the development of tools and resources to help state and local jurisdictions develop and implement robust privacy policies. Available Global resources include the Privacy, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Policy Development Guide for State, Local, and Tribal Justice Entities (Privacy Guide) and Template; the Policy Development Checklist; and a Technical Privacy Initiative (through Global's Information Standards Group).

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For more information, go to www.it.ojp.gov/privacy