What Every Employee Needs to Know About Safeguarding Privacy

Identity theft harms millions of Americans every year. Breaches of personally identifiable information (PII) across the government have been well publicized and costly for individuals and Federal agencies. These breaches have prompted the Administration and Congress to take action to improve the protection of personal information.

As Department of Energy employees and contractors, you have a responsibility to protect all PII. DOE Order 206.1, *Department of Energy Privacy Program*, defines PII as "any information collected or maintained by the Department about an individual, including but not limited to, education, financial transactions, medical history and criminal or employment history, and information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as his/her name, Social Security number, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, biometric data, and including any other personal information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual."

Privacy Act

The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a) establishes controls over what personal information is collected and maintained by the Executive Branch and how that information is used.

The Privacy Act grants certain rights to an individual on whom records are maintained, and assigns responsibilities to an agency which maintains the information.

All DOE employees and contractors are subject to the Privacy Act and must comply with its provisions. Non-compliance with the Privacy Act carries criminal and civil penalties.

Safeguarding & Handling PII

- Encrypt personal information sent via email
- Label Privacy Act protected records "OFFICIAL USE ONLY – PRIVACY ACT DATA"
- Do not collect personal information without proper authority, and only the minimum necessary for carrying out the mission of DOE
- Do not place Privacy Act protected data on unrestricted shared drives, intranets, or the Internet
- Report any loss or unauthorized disclosure of personal data immediately to your supervisor, program manager, Information System Security Manager, or Privacy Act Officer
- Lock your computer whenever you leave your desk and lock up all notes, documents, removable media, laptops, PDAs, and other materials or devices containing personal data when not in use
- Destroy personal information using a Department-approved shredder (see DOE M 471.3-1, *Manual for Identifying and Protecting Official Use Only Information*) when no longer needed and retention is not required
- Be conscious of your surroundings when discussing personal data—protect verbal communication with the same heightened awareness as you would paper or electronic data
- Do not take personal data home, in either paper or electronic format, without the written permission of your manager or other authorizing official, as required
- Never discuss personal data with individuals who do not have a need to know, and never on wireless or cordless phones

Each DOE employee and contractor needs to be aware of their responsibility to—

- protect personal information,
- avoid unauthorized disclosures,
- ensure that no records are maintained without proper public notice in the Federal Register, and
- report immediately, whether confirmed or suspected, any breach or misuse of PII.

For more information on Privacy and protecting PII, refer to DOE Order 206.1, *Department of Energy Privacy Program*, located on the DOE Directives website: http://directives.doe.gov/

Questions should be referred to your supervisor, your local Privacy Act Officer, or the Privacy Office at (202) 586-5955.

Safeguard our Right to Privacy: Strengthen privacy protections for the digital age and harness the power of technology to hold government and business accountable for violations of personal privacy. —President's Agenda on Technology

PRIVACY
PROGRAM

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privacy@hq.doe.gov

http://management.energy.gov/FOIA/privacy.htm

About the Privacy Office

The Department of Energy Privacy Office is Charged with Overseeing and Implementing the Department's Privacy Program

Mission

Preserve and Protect the Privacy of Personal Information

Vision

Strengthen Privacy Protections by Building a Full Lifecycle, Integrated and Auditable Privacy Program that Preserves the Trust of the American People

Employee Guide to Privacy

We Are All Privacy Stakeholders

Privacy is an Essential Trust Shared by the American People

PRIVACY PROGRAM

U.S. Department of Energy
Chief Privacy Officer