

Civil Rights Groups Call for Protection of Democracy and Privacy as Tech Responds to Pandemic

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WASHINGTON – The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, New America’s Open Technology Institute, and 83 civil rights, civil liberties, labor, and consumer protection organizations today released principles to guide employers, policymakers, businesses, and public health authorities as they consider strategies to reopen American society and deploy information technologies designed specifically to monitor, track, or trace individuals in order to mitigate or respond to the COVID-19 public health crisis. The groups note the need to protect the civil rights and privacy of all persons, especially communities of color and other populations who are at high risk for the virus, when considering the deployment of technological measures.

“In this time of global emergency, it is heartening to see so many people coming forward to share ideas and resources to help those in need and prevent further suffering. But we must also be mindful of the risks of overreach and unintended consequences, especially to marginalized communities already suffering disproportionately from the virus and economic hardships,” the groups said. “Use of such technology must only be allowed if it is nondiscriminatory, effective, voluntary, secure, accountable, and used exclusively for public health purposes.”

No COVID-19 response technology has been proven trustworthy and effective for combating the pandemic in the United States. The principles state that use of such technology must only be allowed if it is:

- Nondiscriminatory
- Used Exclusively for Public Health Purposes
- Effective

- Voluntary
- Secure
- Accountable

The principles are available **here** and has the endorsement of the following groups to date:

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas

American Atheists

American Federation of Teachers

American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)

Americans for Financial Reform

Amnesty International – USA

Arab American Institute

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC

Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)

Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation

Autistic Self Advocacy Network

Campesinos Sin Fronteras

Center for American Progress

Center for Democracy and Technology

Center for Digital Democracy

Center for Science and Democracy, Union of Concerned Scientists

Center on Privacy & Technology at Georgetown Law

Common Cause

Constitutional Alliance

Consumer Action

Consumer Federation of America

Customer Commons

Democracy 21

Economic Policy Institute

Electronic Frontier Foundation

Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC)

ELEVATE AAPI @ Irvine Valley College

Equal Rights Advocates
Equality California
Farmworker Association of Florida
Filipina Women's Network
Free Press Action
Freedom House
Government Accountability Project
Government Information Watch
Human Rights Campaign
Impact Fund
Japanese American Citizens League
Justice for Migrant Women
Justice in Aging
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of Women Voters of the United States
Matthew Shepard Foundation
Media Alliance
MediaJustice
Multicultural Efforts to end Sexual Assault (MESA)
Muslim Advocates
NAACP
National Action Network
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Black Justice Coalition
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-income clients
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Employment Lawyers Association
National Health Law Program
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Indian Education Association
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Partnership for Women & Families

National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)
National Urban League
New America's Open Technology Institute
Oakland Privacy
OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates
Open MIC (Open Media & Information Companies Initiative)
Pacific Islander Health Partnership
Prison Policy Initiative
Public Citizen
Public Knowledge
Ranking Digital Rights
Restore The Fourth, Inc.
Silver State Equality-Nevada
South Asian Network
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
UnidosUS
Union for Reform Judaism
United Church of Christ, OC Inc.
Workplace Fairness

*The Leadership Conference Education Fund builds public will for federal policies that promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States. The Education Fund's campaigns empower and mobilize advocates around the country to push for progressive change in the United States. It was founded in 1969 as the education and research arm of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. For more information on The Education Fund, visit [**civilrights.org/edfund/**](https://civilrights.org/edfund/)*



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