USAID Public Web Site Privacy Policies Requirements

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 508

USAID Public Web Site Privacy Policies Requirements

The Privacy Act of 1974 provides protection to individuals (citizens of the United States or aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence) by ensuring that personal information collected by Federal agencies is limited to that which is legally authorized and necessary and is maintained in a manner which precludes unwarranted intrusions upon individual privacy. The Privacy Act requires that whenever an individual is asked to supply personal information about himself, herself, or a family member, USAID inform the individual about the USAID use of the information.

USAID's use of publicly facing (external) Web sites creates new challenges for privacy protections while enabling greater dissemination or exchange of information via Internet technologies. For example, how and when USAID collects personally identifiable information (PII) from Web site visitors is not always obvious to the Web site visitor.

System Owners of USAID public Web sites must post privacy policies that clearly and concisely inform visitors to the Web site what information USAID collects about individuals, why the agency collects the information, and how the agency will use the information. USAID Web sites are those funded in whole or in part by USAID and operated by USAID, contractors, or other organizations on behalf of USAID. System Owners must provide Web site privacy policies that are clearly labeled and easily accessed by visitors to the Web sites, and post privacy policies at major entry points and Web sites where substantial PII is collected.

Systems Owners must monitor their public Web sites to ensure compliance with privacy requirements. The CPO may require corrective actions for sites determined to be non-compliant and may shut down Web sites until the System Owners correct the deficiencies.

All USAID public Web site privacy policies must be approved by the Privacy Office. Please submit public Web site privacy policies to the Privacy Office at **privacy@usaid.gov**.

Drafting a USAID Public Web Site Privacy Policy

System Owners responsible for public Web sites must comply with all OMB privacy-related memoranda to provide public Web site privacy policies. System Owners must post such public Web site privacy policies at 1) their principle Web site; 2) any known, major entry point to their Web sites; and 3) any web page that collects substantial PII.

System Owners must create privacy policies that are clearly labeled and easily accessed; written in plain language; and made clear and easy to understand, whether by integrating all information and statements into a single posting, by layering a short "highlights" notice linked to full explanation, or by other means USAID determines is effective. The following list provides Federal/USAID Web site privacy policy requirements:

a. **Introductory Language.** Reassure individuals that information collected about them will be well and appropriately handled. For example, "Thank you for visiting the USAID website. Your privacy and security are very important to us. Please be aware that USAID does not collect personal information when you visit our website, unless you choose to provide that information. However, we do collect some technical information about your visit to USAID.gov."

b. **Consent to Information Collection and Sharing.** The privacy statement must inform visitors whenever providing requested information is voluntary, how to grant consent for use of voluntarily-provided information, and how to grant consent to use mandatorily-provided information for other than statutorily-mandated uses or authorized routing uses under the Privacy Act.

c. **Rights under the Privacy Act.** Inform visitors of their rights under the Privacy Act or other applicable privacy laws in the body of the Web site privacy policy, via link to the applicable agency regulation, or vial link to other official summary of statutory rights.

d. **Privacy Act Information.** Explain what portion of the information is maintained and retrieved by name or personal identifier in a Privacy Act system of records and provide a Privacy Act Section (e)(3)Statement or Notice.

e. **Prominently Display a Privacy Act Section (e)(3) Statement or Notice.** Notify users of the authority for and purpose and use of the collection of information subject to the Privacy Act, whether providing information is mandatory or voluntary, and the effects of not providing all or any portion of the requested information.

f. **Automatically Collected Information.** Specify what information USAID collects automatically (e.g., user's IP address, location, and time of visit) and identify the use for which it is collected (e.g., site management or security purposes).

g. **Interaction with Children.** Web sites that provide content to children under 13 and that collect PII from these visitors must incorporate requirements of the requirements of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) in its privacy policy.

h. **Tracking and Customization Activities.** Do not use of persistent cookies or any other means (e.g., web beacons) to track visitors' activity on the Web site, unless such use is specifically approved by the Administrator of USAID. Technology that is used facilitate a visitor's activity for a single session (e.g., session cookie) and does not persist over time is not subject to the prohibition. Customization technology (to customize a Web site at the visitor's request) if approved by the Administrator or designee for use and where a notice is posted to include: the purpose of the tracking (i.e., customization of the site), that

accepting the customizing feature is voluntary, that declining the feature still permits the individual to use the site, and the privacy safeguards in place for handling the information collected. Password access to information that does not involve persistent cookies or similar technology is permitted.

i.   **Law Enforcement and Homeland Security Sharing.** Where applicable, indicate that collected information may be shared and protected as necessary for authorized law enforcement, homeland security, and national security activities.

j.   **Security of the Information.** Comply with existing requirements for computer security in administering Web sites. Post, in clear language, information about management, operational and technical controls ensuring the security and confidentiality of PII (e.g., access controls, data storage procedures, periodic testing of safeguards, etc.). Provide, in general terms, information about any additional safeguards used to identify and prevent unauthorized attempts to access or cause harm to information and systems. This statement should be at a level to inform the public that their information is being protected while not compromising security.

k.   **Privacy Policy in Machine-Readable Formats.** Adopt machine readable technology that alerts users automatically about whether Web site privacy practices match their personal privacy preferences. Such technology enables users to make an informed choice about whether to conduct business with that Web site.

USAID Systems Owners must monitor their USAID public Web sites to ensure compliance with privacy requirements. The Chief Privacy Officer may require corrective actions for Web sites determined to be non-compliant, and may shut down Web sites until the deficiencies are corrected.

Example of a USAID Public Web Site Privacy Policy

This is the current privacy policy for usaid.gov:

PRIVACY POLICY

Privacy Notice

Thank you for visiting the USAID website. Your privacy and security are very important to us. Please be aware that USAID does not collect personal information when you visit our website, unless you choose to provide that information. However, we do collect some technical information about your visit to USAID.gov.

We would like to make you aware of a law that provides to you with certain rights concerning your personal information. This is described in the Privacy Act of 1974 (as amended by 5 U.S.C. 552a)

governing Federal Records. This law concerns any information held in a Privacy Act System of Records (SOR) that can be retrieved by a personal identifier such as name, social security number, or other identifying number or symbol. An individual is entitled to access to his or her records and to request correction of these records if applicable. The Privacy Act prohibits disclosure of these records without the written consent of the individual(s) to whom the records pertain unless one of the twelve disclosure exceptions enumerated in the Act applies. The actual Act can be found **here**.

This is how we handle information about your visit to our Web site:

Information Collected and Stored Automatically

When you visit USAID.gov, we may store some or all of the following:

- the IP address from which you accessed our site
- the date and time
- the URL of the website from which you linked to our site
- the name of the file or words you searched for
- the pages you visited on our site
- the items clicked on a page
- the browser and operating system used

We do not collect or track any personal information through these processes. We use this information, in the aggregate, to make our website more useful to visitors - to learn about the number of visitors to our site and the types of technology used, to detect operational problems, and to improve the website's overall security.

Information You Provide to U.S. Agency for International Development

You do not have to provide any personal information to view this website.

You may choose to provide your contact information to USAID in order to receive information such as our agency newsletter or to participate in an on-line collaboration forum.

USAID will only use your personal information for the purpose for which it was provided, such as to respond to your message or to provide subscriptions you have chosen. In certain instances, your comment or suggestion may be forwarded to other U.S. government agencies or departments if they are in the best position to respond to your message.

Some of our newsletters are sent using third-party email distribution systems. In these cases, the email privacy policy will be available to you at the time you sign up for the newsletter. A link will be provided at the bottom of each newsletter with instructions on how to unsubscribe.

In certain instances, such as blog comments or discussion groups, the information you provide may be visible to the public. Please do not share any personal information that you do not want made available to the public. USAID is not responsible for how other participants may use your information.

When you voluntarily submit information, it constitutes your consent to the use of the information for the purpose stated. When you click the "Submit" button on any of the Web forms found on our sites, you are indicating your voluntary consent to the use of the information you submit, for the stated purpose.

Security Notice

For site security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, this government computer system employs software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information, or otherwise cause damage.

Unauthorized attempts to upload or change information on this site are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and the National Information Infrastructure Protection Act (Title 18 U.S.C., Sections 1001 and 1030).

If monitoring reveals evidence of possible criminal activity, such evidence may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

Cookies

When you visit some websites, their web servers generate pieces of information known as cookies. Cookies are commonly used to recognize your computer in the future.

USAID.gov uses single-session cookies to serve technical purposes, like providing seamless navigation through our site. These cookies do not permanently record data, and they are not stored on your computer's hard drive. USAID.gov's session cookies are only available during an active browser session. When you close your browser, the session cookie disappears.

USAID.gov also uses multi-session cookies to help us understand how people use the site, and how we can make it better. Traffic statistics are collected anonymously and aggregated, and no information is traceable to any specific individual. USAID does not collect PII (personally identifiable information) such as social security numbers, date or place of birth.

Cookies-Tier 1 (single session) and Tier 2 (multi-session without PII)-are used on USAID.gov in compliance with **OMB Memorandum 10-22, Guidance for Online Use of Web Measurement and Customization Technologies** (PDF). USAID.gov does not use Tier 3 (multi-session with PII) cookies.

Cookies may also be set by the following third-party providers on USAID.gov

- *Google Analytics:* A tier 2 cookie sets when the page is loaded - used to improve web metrics capabilities.

- ***YouTube:*** A tier 2 cookie sets when the video is played - used to maintain the integrity of video statistics

Usage of a cookie is in no way linked to any personally identifiable information. You can remove or block cookies by changing the settings of your browser. For Opt-out instructions relating to cookies, please visit **here.**

General Disclaimer & Copyright Notice

Information presented on this Web site is considered public information and may be distributed or copied freely unless identified as being subject to copyright protection. In return, we request only that USAID be cited as the source of any information, photos, and images copied from this site and that any photo credits or bylines be similarly credited to the photographer or author.

We strongly recommend that USAID data be acquired directly from this website and not through other sources that may change the information in some way or exclude material crucial to the understanding of that information. While we make every effort to provide accurate and complete information, some information may change between site updates.

Disclaimer of Liability

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Disclaimer of Endorsement

The information posted on USAID.gov includes links to information created and maintained by other public and/or private organizations. This site provides these links solely for our users' information and convenience. When users select a link to an outside website, they are leaving USAID.gov and are subject to the privacy and security policies of the owners/sponsors of the outside website. The managers of this site:

- **Do not** control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of information contained on a linked website;
- **Do not** endorse the organizations sponsoring linked websites, and we do not endorse the views they express or the products/services they offer;
- **Cannot** authorize the use of copyrighted materials contained in linked websites. Users must request such authorization from the sponsor of the linked website;
- **Are not** responsible for transmissions users receive from linked websites;
- **Do not** guarantee that outside websites comply with Section 508 (Accessibility Requirements) of the Rehabilitation Act.

We strongly recommend that you review the policies of any outside websites you visit from this site, since you will be subject to the privacy and security policies of those other sites, once you leave USAID.gov.

Social Media

USAID maintains a blog and profiles on several third-party social media sites. We are present on these sites in order to tell the story of USAID to the American public and to host-country audiences.

While we encourage commenting and conversation on our social media profiles, please remember that they are a public forum and any information provided will be visible to the public. Please do not include personal details such as your telephone number, email address, or any other personal information that you do not want available to the general public.

While some Personally Identifying Information (PII) may become available to USAID through your use of social media (i.e. we can see your name and picture if you post a **comment**), we will not be collecting, sharing, or storing that information. Our presence on social media sites is not intended to endorse, recommend, or favor any third-party company or service provider.

Embedded Third-Party Content

USAID makes use of third-party embeddable content and applications (widgets). When content is embedded from a third-party provider, we will clearly label the source of the content. Embedded videos may set a cookie when they are played. For more information please see our **cookie policy**.

Site Management

The Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs manages the overall content, design, and organization of this website and coordinates the release of USAID information on the Internet.

Accessibility

USAID is committed to providing access to all individuals seeking information on USAID.gov. To provide this information, this site has been built to comply with **Section 508** of the Rehabilitation Act (as amended). Section 508 requires that all individuals with disabilities (whether federal employees or members of the general public) have access to and use of information and data, comparable to that provided to individuals without disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on us. If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader, Braille reader, etc.) and have trouble accessing information on this site, please **contact us** with the nature of the problem, the URL (web address) of the information you tried to access, and your contact information. We will contact you as soon as possible, and do what we can to provide you with the information you need.

Accessing Documents in Different File Formats

Some documents on USAID.gov are in Portable Document Format (PDF), so you can view publications in their original format regardless of the type of computer, browser, or operating system you use to access the Internet. In order to view, navigate through, and print PDF documents, you must first download the free **Acrobat Reader software**. For best results, you should install version 10.x or later. Visit the **Adobe Reader Help and Support page** for troubleshooting tips. If you use a screen reader, you may want to visit Adobe's **Reader accessibility** page, which has a user's guide for accessing PDF documents with assistive technology.

Verification of Content

If you would like verification of information released on this USAID Web site, contact our staff:

Information Center
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523-1000
Phone: 202-712-4810
Fax: 202-216-3524
http://www.usaid.gov/comment

For More Information

If you have any questions or comments about the information presented here, please contact USAID at the address or phone or fax numbers listed above or **e-mail us**.

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