
PRIVACY NEWS

Happy New Year!

Here's an update on our news from the end of 2021. We look forward to accomplishing even more in 2022, and we hope you have a healthy and happy new year!



[PDX Privacy](#) is a group of volunteers in the Portland Metro Area who are interested in privacy-related issues and advocate for personal privacy, government transparency, and digital rights.

[Portland skyline](#)

[Photo credit: PDX Privacy](#)

Surveillance in Portland

City of Portland staff have been working over the past several years to enact privacy protections for residents and visitors. The effort started in 2017, when [Smart City PDX](#) began drafting the [Privacy and Information Protection Resolution](#), which was approved by City Council on June 19, 2019. While the legislation is non-binding, the resolution served as a foundation for additional privacy safeguards in the form of ordinances, which do hold the weight of law.

Following successful adoption of the resolution, City staff commenced work on two facial recognition ban ordinances, both of which were unanimously adopted in September 2020. The public ban prohibits the use of facial recognition technology by city agencies, while the private ban prohibits use by private entities in “places of public accommodation” — stores, concert venues, sidewalks, and other privately-owned places that are available for public

use. The private ban is especially noteworthy because it was the first, and is still the only, ban on private use of facial recognition technologies in the US.

Surveillance ordinance panel discussion event

Building upon these protections, City staff commenced work on a more comprehensive surveillance policy. To help the community learn more about what surveillance ordinances are and how they work, we cohosted a [panel discussion event](#) last April with [Portland's Techno-Activism 3rd Mondays](#), bringing together several experts to share their knowledge about why such ordinances are important and how they might work here in Portland.

Meet the experts event

Then, in October, we participated in a [panel discussion event](#) hosted by Smart City PDX and Portland's [Office of Equity and Human Rights](#). This event was a digital literacy event that was part of the development of the City of Portland's surveillance technologies policy and also included panelists from [The Carceral Tech Resistance Network](#), [Secure Justice](#), and [Just Futures Law](#). After the moderated panel, attendees asked questions of the panelists and provided their own insights related to digital justice, digital rights, and surveillance technologies.

Surveillance ordinance policy codesign event

On December 13, 2021, we teamed up with Smart City PDX, Portland's Office of Equity and Human Rights, and [Cascadia Partners](#) to host a [policy codesign event](#). The first half of the two-hour event was a presentation on surveillance technologies and their impacts on residents, followed by breakout sessions, where participants had the opportunity to share their thoughts on digital justice, digital rights, and surveillance technologies from both personal and policy perspectives.

Current city code does not address newer technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) or predictive inference algorithms, and City staff also want to address the structural inequities and harms of surveillance that fall disproportionately on certain groups, like communities of color and the immigrant and refugee communities.

City staff are using public input gathered at the event to create a surveillance ordinance draft that will be presented to the Portland City Council sometime this spring. The ordinance drafters hope to have a strong bill passed by summer 2022. Sign up for [alert messages](#) or join our [discussion list](#) to stay abreast of more opportunities to offer input.

Auditor report on police surveillance

Staff at the City Auditor's office conducted an [audit on Portland police surveillance](#) in 2021, and we gave input into various types of surveillance that may be used by police along with our related concerns. The report will be released this spring, and we'll share links once they are available.

Apple protest

[Fight for the Future](#) and the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) (EFF) organized a day of protests that took place across the country on September 13th to speak out against Apple's plan to put spyware on its devices. We supported the Portland event, which took place at the downtown Apple Store located on SW Yamhill Street.



Photo credit: Fight for the Future

On August 5, 2021, Apple announced plans for the default scanning of all images uploaded to iCloud for users who have iCloud Photos enabled. In an attempt to detect images that match known Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), the software would have scanned images on user devices before uploading those images to iCloud. Upon detecting thirty known child

Photo caption: Protest at the Apple Store in downtown Portland. Five

people are shown standing in front of metal fencing that encloses the store. A woman on the left side of the frame is holding a megaphone and a small sign. Two people to the right of her (in the center) are holding a large banner that reads "No spyware on our phones, ever." Two people on the right side of the frame are holding smaller signs similar to the sign the woman on the left has. pornography images, Apple planned to flag the user account and notify law enforcement. Implementing such a system would break end-to-end encryption in the Messages app, creating a backdoor into our phones. Additionally, if Apple were to put this capability into effect, authorities would then be able to demand scans of our phones not only for child pornography, but for any other content deemed objectionable. Authoritarian governments could use such functionality to target journalists, activists, and political opposition. If implemented by Apple, then Google, Facebook, and other companies would almost certainly follow suit.

The software would also have scanned all images sent or received by child accounts using Messages, warning both children and their parents when sexually explicit photos are transmitted. This notification to parents assumed a loving home environment, and in child abuse situations, the alerts could have actually ended up endangering the children they were meant to protect.

As a result of the widespread outcry against the scanning software, Apple has decided to postpone the update.

Education

We did another training session for the [Senior Studies Institute](#) (SSI) at [Portland Community College](#) (PCC) in November. SSI is a volunteer-run non-profit organization affiliated with PCC that provides educational presentations for older adults. The session, titled “Hacks, Ransomware, Spyware, Privacy, & Cybersecurity: What is going on and what can we do about it?”, was presented by AJ Rice and drew approximately twenty-five attendees.

If you're interested in scheduling a privacy training for your community group or non-profit organization, please reach out to info@pdxprivacy.org.

Back in June, we hosted a 3-part privacy workshop. If you missed any parts of the workshop, [videos of the sessions are now available](#) on our website along with links to further information about each topic presented.

Coalitions

This past fall, we combined efforts with Fight for the Future to call for federal privacy legislation and for a ban on the use of facial recognition in stores.

Here are the coalitions we joined:

October 12, 2021

Fight for the Future's “How to Stop Facebook” campaign

<https://www.howtostopfacebook.org/>



Photo credit: “Learn Key” by Got Credit is licensed under CC BY 2.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/?ref=openverse&atype=rich>

As Congress was debating how to address the harms revealed by Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen, we joined Fight for the Future and more than seventy other organizations in calling for a real federal privacy law that makes illegal the data harvesting and surveillance practices used by Facebook and other tech companies.

November 17, 2021

Fight for the Future campaign to ban facial recognition use in stores

<https://www.banfacialrecognition.com/stores/>

We joined Fight for the Future and thirty-five other organizations in calling for retailers to not use facial recognition technology in their stores. People should not have their faces scanned or have their faceprints stored or sold just because they walk into a store or work there.

Upcoming events

February 18 | 12:00-1:15 pm PT

CPRA Law + Tech Series: Understanding Data, Decision Making, and Design

<https://fpf.org/fpf-event/cpra-law-tech-series-understanding-data-decision-making-and-design/>

In this Winter 2022 series, the [California Lawyers Association Privacy Law Section](#) and [Future of Privacy Forum](#) will host informational sessions on technological basics for privacy lawyers. Each session will provide a brief summary of new requirements under the CPRA, the Virginia Consumer Data Protection Act (VCDPA), and the Colorado Privacy Act (CPA), accompanied by an exploration of the key technologies that are addressed in these laws, including digital advertising, global opt-outs, automated decision-making, and dark patterns.

Cost: Free

February 19 | 1:00 pm PT

Town Hall with Senator Ron Wyden - Washington County

<https://www.facebook.com/events/308054091294783/>

All Oregonians are invited to this live, virtual town hall with Senator Wyden. Residents of Washington County will be given priority to ask questions. Sign up by February 17 to be selected to ask a live video question: <https://forms.gle/2hVrt8xfFT8Z8UKC6>, or submit a question in the comments on the event page listed above.

February 25 | 12:00 pm PT

Town Hall with Senator Ron Wyden - Multnomah County

<https://www.facebook.com/events/645127850095481/>

All Oregonians are invited to this live, virtual town hall with Senator Wyden. Residents of Multnomah County will be given priority to ask questions. Sign up by February 23 to be selected to ask a live video question: <https://forms.gle/2hVrt8xfFT8Z8UKC6>, or submit a question in the comments on the event page listed above.

February 26 | 11 am PT

Ethics In Tech Drops Sweets, Not Bombs!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ethics-in-tech-drops-fudge-and-sweets-while-our-inept-leaders-look-to-war-tickets-264192666377>

A discussion on the military industrial complex, the drive to war, and how military policies effect policing and surveillance here at home. Via a small business in San Francisco, [Ethics in Technology](#) will be delivering fudge and other candy to anyone in the contiguous United States who wants them. People not interested in receiving candy can instead donate their ticket fees to a nonprofit of Ethics In Tech's choice that deals with frontline victims of war and its refugees. The event features speakers from Ethics in Technology, [Common Dreams](#), EFF, and the peace movement.

Cost: sliding scale of \$2-\$49. Learn more about the event here:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ethics-in-tech-drops-fudge-and-sweets-while-our-inept-leaders-look-to-war-tickets-264192666377>

Get Involved!

Interested in privacy-related issues, government transparency, or digital rights? Join us, and work towards securing privacy and digital rights in the Portland Metro Area!

Our general meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 6 pm, and we also have several sub-groups doing work focused on specific areas such as education, surveillance, transparency, research, outreach, and policy.

To attend our meetings or get more information, email get_involved@pdxprivacy.org. You can also sign up to receive email [alerts](#) when there are privacy matters where you can take action, or join the conversation in our [discussion](#) list.