The Privacy Pulse

OFFICE OF THE SENIOR OFFICIAL FOR PRIVACY

http://oma.od.nih.gov/ms/privacy | http://oma.nih.gov/dms/programs/privacy/SitePages/Home.aspx

Greetings from the NIH Office of the Senior Official for Privacy! The purpose of this Privacy Pulse email communication is to alert NIH employees and contractors of a major change to the privacy policy of one of the most widely-used online infrastructures: Google.

On March 1st, Google implemented its new privacy policy, which affects all of Google's products such as Gmail, YouTube, Search, Calendars, and Google +. This change is major: the new policy allows the company to collect an extensive amount of data when you are logged into your Google account—and there is no opt-out feature. To limit the potential impact of this change and to protect NIH data, we have highlighted the most important facts below.

Google's privacy policy changes

Data Collected, how it affects you, and what to do to minimize risk:

Google has explicitly stated that they will "integrate" almost anything in the Google ecosystem. This means that if you're logged into your Google account, Google will be able to track and store information on everything you do. This includes searches, videos watched, directions, location data, calendar appointments, and more. NIH employees and contractors should avoid doing anything work-related when logged on to their personal Google accounts and should not put any NIH-related calendar items on their Google calendars. Keep in mind that if you are logged into your Gmail account in one tab of your browser, switching to another tab does not log you out. You must be vigilant in insuring that you are fully logged out of your Google account if you do not want your data collected.

Cellular device usage and NIH data:

Google's privacy policy poses the most risk to those who access their products with their cellular devices— particularly Android phones. While PC users have the option of logging out of their Google accounts, Android users do not have that option. NIH employees and contractors using Android phones should refrain from storing NIH data on their devices. Non-Android users are still not in the clear. The company will still be able to collect a great deal of data, including your telephone model, operating system version, unique device identifiers, and more when you access Google products from your device. When using NIH IT resources for personal use, please refer to NIH Manual Chapter 2806, *Limited Authorized Personal Use of NIH IT*.

For more information, please visit:

- Google Privacy Policy Preview
- Google Privacy Policy Overview
- Google Privacy Policy Impact on Federal Users

Feedback/Questions? Please contact the OSOP at: privacy@mail.nih.gov or (301) 451-3426.