VA Privacy Service

Privacy in Action Speaker Series Event Resource Guide

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Privacy Service, thank you for participating in the Privacy in Action Speaker Series event, “It Takes a Team: A Deeper Look at how Privacy, Records and FOIA Intersect.” We hope you found the information presented by our panelists insightful and meaningful to your daily work. Below is a recap of the main topics discussed today, with links to additional information.

The Privacy Act of 1974

The Privacy Act of 1974 (“Privacy Act”), 5 U.S.C. § 552a, contains provisions that grant a right of access for citizens to federal records. The Privacy Act also establishes control over the kinds of personal information that is collected by the federal government, as well as its use. Notably, the Privacy Act only applies to records held by the agency that contain information about individuals that are maintained in a system of records. There were several policy objectives for the Privacy Act including restricting the disclosure of personally identifiable records, granting individuals rights of access to their records, allowing individuals the right to amend records, and establishing a code of fair information practices.

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”), 5 U.S.C. § 552, generally allows any person with the statutory right to obtain access to government information in executive branch agency records. FOIA also establishes controls for the kinds of information that can be released by executive branch agencies. The main policy objectives for FOIA were to ensure an informed citizenry and increased transparency for government activities.

An Introduction to Records Management (RM) within Federal Agencies

Records Management functions within federal agencies are regulated under several laws, regulations and policies, including, but not limited to, the Federal Records Act. The Federal

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Records Act, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 31, establishes general duties, program management requirements, and requirements for the transfer of records. 

More information

Agency Links

- National Archives and Records Administration, available at: https://www.archives.gov/.

Information and Articles Links


---

• U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Privacy Principles, available at: