

# Heather: Protect sensitive data and information

Hello, my name is Heather and I'm the Vice President of Security Engineering at Google. PII has been an important topic on the internet since the beginning of the internet. And we have been talking about increasingly sophisticated ways to protect that data over time. When we think about collecting PII on behalf of another person, we should make sure we're very deliberate about how it's handled and where it's stored, and that we understand where it's stored all the time. Depending on what kind of role you're in, you might also need to protect that data to comply with regulation or law. And so, it's important to understand how the data relates to some of those obligations. If an organization fails to meet their obligations, a number of things might happen. First, you might see a government regulator become more interested in understanding the practices around how a company is handling data. Secondly, consumers, customers, businesses may actually begin to directly inquire of the company how they're handling data. And this may become part of the customer relationship and increasingly important if that data is very sensitive. And third, the last consequence is legal action. And it's not uncommon for us to see victims of cybersecurity incidents now suing companies for mishandling their data. You can keep up to date with compliance, regulation and laws around PII by consulting the relevant website in the jurisdiction that you have a question for. Many government websites now post the laws, regulations, and compliance requirements for data that's being handled. The regulations and laws that govern how PII can be handled are very complex, all over the world, countries, states, counties are regulating it at different levels. It's important to understand and to be aware that these laws exist. However, if you need to ask a question about a specific law, it's important to seek advice from legal counsel for that particular jurisdiction. It may be very different than the jurisdiction that you're in.

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