Data ethics - Guidance overview

This page is from APP, the official source of professional practice for policing.

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This authorised professional practice (APP) provides guidance on making ethical decisions where data is being collected, stored, shared or used. It also sets out principles to support police officers, staff and volunteers to integrate ethical considerations into data processing practices.

This APP is aimed at:

- chief officers who have legal responsibility for how their organisation collects, stores, shares or uses data
- senior leaders, such as chief data officers (CDO) and data protection officers (DPO)
- data analysts and specialists
- project leads tasked with the responsibility for collecting, storing, analysing, sharing or using data in a particular project or task
- all police officers, staff and volunteers who collect, store, analyse, share or use data as part of their role
- designated contract managers, contractors and staff employed by suppliers who collect, analyse, share or use data on behalf of forces

This APP is also relevant to non-Home Office police forces and organisations, including:

- police and crime commissioners
- the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- the Police Digital Service (PDS)
- the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
- His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS)
- the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner (BSCC)
- the Home Office

Officers and staff should also take guidance provided in the following documents into account when applying the guidance set out in this APP:

- **Government data ethics framework**
- **NPCC: Covenant for using artificial intelligence (AI) in policing**
- **Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group principles**
- **Code of Ethics**
- **National decision model**
- **Information management APP**
- **Data-driven technologies APP**

Officers and staff should ensure that, where necessary, a data protection impact assessment (DPIA) is completed. Please refer to the **ICO guidance on DPIAs**.

Definitions and terms

- Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to technologies with the ability to perform intellectual processes that would otherwise require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition and language translation.
- Data controllers are individuals who hold the legal responsibility for the way in which data is gathered, processed, stored and deleted under the **Data Protection Act 2018**. Chief constables are the legal controllers of police data.
- Human-in-the-loop is the process of combining machine and human intelligence to inform decision making.
- Process refers to the collecting, storing, sharing or use of data.

Legal considerations

The principles in this document comply with the **Human Rights Act 1998**, the **Data Protection Act 2018** and the **Equality Act 2010**.

Tags

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