

Facebook Apps Will Need Privacy Policies

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California's Attorney General, Kamala Harris, has announced that Facebook signed on to the Joint Statement of Principles about privacy policies and mobile apps. As we reported in February, the Principles call for all mobile apps to have a privacy policy in order to comply with the California Online Privacy Protection Act. (The Act requires operators of online services to conspicuously post a privacy policy if they collect personally identifiable information from Californians.) With Facebook joining as a signatory to the Principles, the requirement to have privacy policies will now apply to apps sold in Facebook's "App Center." Apps sold in the Center include both mobile and other apps that can be used on Facebook. Facebook gives app developers the ability to post not only information about their apps in its App Center, but also to provide links to their privacy policies. Facebook joins Amazon, Apple, Google, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, and Research in Motion, who signed on to the Joint Statement in February. Facebook also plans to participate in the California AG's Advisory Group on Mobile Privacy Practices, and contribute to the Group's mission of developing best practices for mobile privacy.

TIP: Now that Facebook has signed onto these Principles, companies can expect to be required by Facebook to have privacy policies for their Facebook apps. Companies should thus examine their privacy policies to ensure that they adequately address and describe the collection and use of personally identifiable information through Facebook apps.

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