

What Is Workplace Privacy Law?

Workplace Privacy Law

Workplace privacy law involves the legal questions that arise as employers monitor their employees' activities. Companies may monitor through visual surveillance, such as cameras, and electronic surveillance, and email audits. Businesses monitor to protect confidential information and to help prevent behavioral violations. Employers have broad rights to copy and monitor email sent over company electronic systems and to view these emails as business property. Emails can be monitored based on a number of business principles, including to encourage productivity and discourage illegal activity. Regarding surveillance, employees are allowed reasonable expectations of privacy in areas such as bathrooms. Legal issues may arise when hidden cameras are placed in work areas where employees are not aware of the surveillance.

The Electronics Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) addresses how phone calls may be monitored in the workplace. The law does not allow the monitoring of personal phone calls and voicemails, unless the employee has been notified. Each state may also have labor laws to dictate how employees are monitored.

Related Capabilities

Privacy & Data Security