



## Privacy in America: A Timeline of Legislation

### 1789 - Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution

<https://goo.gl/iY93DG>

"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

### 1968 – Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act, Title III (Wiretap Act) <https://goo.gl/dnctcK>

The Wiretap Act:

- "Prohibits the unauthorized, nonconsensual interception of 'wire, oral, or electronic communications' by government agencies as well as private parties
- Establishes procedures for obtaining warrants to authorize wiretapping by government officials
- Regulates the disclosure and use of authorized intercepted communications by investigative and law enforcement officers"

### 1986 - Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA)

<https://goo.gl/GWzqAk>

The ECPA "protects wire, oral, and electronic communications while those communications are being made, are in transit, and when they are stored on computers. The Act applies to email, telephone conversations, and data stored electronically."

### 2001 - Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (USA PATRIOT) Act <https://goo.gl/2tnXTe>

This law, enacted less than two months after the attacks of September 11, 2001, modified existing federal privacy law to enhance domestic security against terrorism, enhance surveillance procedures, remove obstacles to investigating terrorism, increase information sharing for the purpose of protecting the country, and improve national intelligence.

