

Three New State Privacy Laws Take Effect January 1 - And Massachusetts May Be Next

October 30, 2025 - Starting January 1 2026 new data privacy laws will take effect in Indiana Kentucky and Rhode Island giving millions of Americans more rights over how their personal information is collected shared and sold. Though each law has its own twist they all offer a set of core protections that include the right to know what data companies collect about you the right to delete or correct that data and the ability to opt out of targeted advertising or the sale of personal information. These laws are part of a growing movement among states to give consumers more control over their personal data.

While the laws share many similarities they differ in important ways. For instance Rhode Island's law applies to companies that handle as few as 10,000 consumers data if they also make a certain amount of money from selling it while Indiana and Kentucky set the bar higher at 25,000 or even 100,000 individuals depending on the companies business model. Kentuckys law is also less strict in some areas - it does not require businesses to honor browser based global privacy controls which are signals users can send to websites to opt out of tracking. Meanwhile Indiana takes a more structured approach by requiring businesses to conduct risk assessments for certain types of data use like profiling or processing sensitive information. Each state law reflects a different balance between consumer protections and business interests.

All three laws carve out wide exemptions for certain industries and institutions. Government agencies are largely excluded as are nonprofit organizations colleges and companies already covered by federal laws like HIPAA health privacy and GLBA financial privacy. This means that a hospital following federal health privacy rules may not be affected by a state privacy law and local governments wont need to change how they manage citizen data under these rules. These exemptions raise questions about fairness and consistency - why should a consumers privacy depend on who is collecting the data rather than the data itself

Massachusetts may soon join this trend. A new privacy bill passed by its state Senate earlier this month could become law sometime in 2026. If enacted it would offer even stronger protections than the other three states including bans on the sale of sensitive data like biometrics and tighter rules on when companies can collect personal information in the first place. The proposed law is still being debated and has not yet been signed but it signals that the push for stricter privacy rules is not slowing down.

As more states move to give people greater control over their personal information it is important for consumers to stay informed. These laws do not cover everyone and do not apply to every kind of data but they mark a growing recognition that personal privacy matters - and that states are not waiting for Washington to act.

For more information visit these official resources

Indiana: <https://www.in.gov/attorneygeneral/>

Kentucky: <https://ag.ky.gov/>

Rhode Island: <https://riag.ri.gov/>

Massachusetts pending legislation: <https://malegislature.gov/>
by Jim Malmberg

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