



Data Privacy & Security Performance Audit

March 2022

Our audit assessed whether the City of Long Beach (City) has the right processes in place to make sure that cloud software vendors keep residents' information as secure and private as possible.

Why This Audit Is Important

The City collects residents' personally identifiable information to provide public services, like emergency response, health clinics, and recreation classes. This includes information that is highly sensitive and confidential, such as:



Social Security numbers
Drivers' Licenses



Criminal history
Victim and witness information



Medical records



Payment card information

The City contracts with vendors to store residents' information in cloud-based software. If this information were breached, it could harm residents, such as through identity theft. It could also harm the City through loss of public trust, legal liability, and remediation costs.

What We Recommend

While the audit did not reveal any security breaches, we found that the City needs to improve its data privacy and security processes to better protect residents' information. We recommended best practices related to:



Setting data security and privacy requirements for cloud vendors



Strengthening contract terms related to data protection



Managing contracts with cloud software vendors who store residents' data

What Happens Next



We provided a separate report to the Technology & Innovation Department and other relevant City departments that details our three findings and 14 recommendations to strengthen the City's data privacy and security processes. As the findings and recommendations include sensitive information about potential data security vulnerabilities, this information is omitted from public disclosure under state law and government auditing standards.



The Technology & Innovation Department generally agrees with our recommendations and has outlined a plan to implement them. We will follow up in the future to confirm that these improvements were made.



Acknowledgement

We thank management and staff in the Technology & Innovation Department and in the departments providing the City services reviewed in this audit for their collaboration, assistance, and cooperation during this audit.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on the audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on the audit objectives.



About the Long Beach City Auditor's Office

The Long Beach City Auditor's Office's mission is to make Long Beach better through independent audits and fraud investigations. The Office works to provide assurance City funds are spent as intended, promote transparency and accountability of City operations, and prevent fraud, waste and abuse of City resources.

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