

**West Virginia Executive Branch**

**Privacy Policy:** *Accountability*

**It's Really About Trust**

**Question:**

I know that my Department Privacy Officer attends monthly PMT meetings, but I have no idea what this group does. What does PMT stand for and what do they really do to serve the people of West Virginia?

**Answer:**

The West Virginia Executive Branch Privacy Policies provide a framework for privacy, just as the Office of Technology (OT) policies provide a framework for information security. But privacy and security aren't the ultimate goals. Trust is.

Consider the mission of the Privacy Management Team. The PMT was established to:

- Promote the protection of Personally Identifiable Information (PII),
- Balance privacy with other people's need and right to know PII, and
- Realize the benefits of information flows within and across agencies, in conformance with privacy policies and laws.

How do we realize these goals? The answer is to build trust with our citizens. Privacy and security of PII are necessary for trust to exist. But privacy and security alone do not generate trust. To be trusted, we also have to use PII to generate real value for our citizens.

Trust can be depicted as a product of three things: value, privacy and security.  $T=VPS$ . If you use PII in ways that provide real value, and you provide appropriate privacy and security protection for the PII, you will have trust. If you don't have privacy or security, you cannot be trusted; but if you don't deliver value, you won't be trusted either.

What does this "trust equation" mean for us? It means that you must consider more than just privacy and security when you are evaluating the collection, use or disclosure of PII. You must also ask, "how will this program benefit the citizens?" Will it create value? For example, if you want to collect PII online in order to enable citizens to schedule appointments more easily, that provides value. But if you collect information that does not have obvious value to the person, such as requiring people to fill out unnecessary forms, you may erode trust.

By thinking about how to deliver value to our citizens from our collection, use and disclosure of PII, you will go a long way to helping the PMT achieve its ultimate goals of enabling data flows, protecting privacy, and ensuring that the Executive Branch Agencies are truly trusted stewards of West Virginians' PII.