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Andrews Government Must Ensure Trust in COVID Check-in Data Privacy

VALS, Liberty Victoria, the Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre, the Human Rights Law Centre and Fitzroy Legal Service call on the Andrews Government to implement laws to protect Victorians' private information that is being collected for contact tracing.

Check in data has played a vital role in strengthening Victoria's contact tracing system during the pandemic. It relies on the Victorian community having faith that their personal information will be managed correctly and only used for the specific purpose of contact tracing.

These leading legal, human rights and civil liberties organisations have serious concerns about reports that Victoria Police have attempted to access check-in data for the purpose of criminal investigations.

The Western Australian Government has already legislated to prevent the use of contact tracing check-in data for criminal investigations. The Andrews Government needs to do implement similar legislation to make it clear that check-in information can only be used for contact tracing purposes.

Quotes Attributable to Andreea Lachs, Head of Policy, Communications and Strategy, Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

"The Andrews Government needs to be proactive in protecting the integrity of the contract tracing system. Victoria cannot afford another major breakout because public faith in check-in data security was undermined by it being used for purposes other than the public health uses for which it is intended."

Quotes Attributable to Julia Kretzenbacher, President, Liberty Victoria

"Successful contact tracing requires trust and in order for Victorians to trust the system, they need to be confident their personal data is only used for a public health purpose. The Government needs to introduce laws which state expressly that check in data can only be used for public health purposes. Police already have sufficient and strong investigation powers, they do not also need access to private check-in data."



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Quotes Attributable to Gregor Husper, Principal Lawyer, Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre

“Victoria Police has once again shown its inability to balance invasive policing techniques with personal freedoms and community wellbeing. The Andrews Government must safeguard personal contact tracing data from over-reach by Victoria Police.”

Quotes Attributable to Meena Singh, Legal Director, Human Rights Law Centre

It is integral that the privacy of people ‘checking in’ using QR codes is respected and that the data is only used for its designated public health purposes – contact tracing. The Andrews government must make it clear that QR code data cannot be accessed by members of Victoria Police in any other circumstances. Anything less undermines the entire objective – and effectiveness – of this vital public health measure.

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