

March 18, 2020



Zoom
55 Almaden Boulevard, 6th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113

Open letter: Zoom's policies affecting digital rights


Dear Mr. Yuan,

We write to begin a dialogue about Zoom's impacts on the human rights to privacy and freedom of expression, and to provide recommendations on how to improve policies on disclosure and processing of third-party requests. In these trying times, as the world moves to working online to protect the health and safety of our communities and stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, companies such as Zoom have become our new workplaces. We're also using video conferencing and voice-over-internet-protocol (VoIP) platforms to connect with family, friends, and essential services, from health to education. Therefore, it is all the more imperative that you are transparent about how your policies affect human rights and the steps you take to minimize any interference.

Access Now (www.accessnow.org) is a global civil society organization committed to defending and extending the human rights of users at risk. Since 2014, we have publicly issued and updated a [Transparency Reporting Index](#), which compiles transparency reports from technology companies around the world. Regular reporting is one of the strongest ways for technology companies to disclose threats to user privacy and free expression. Such reports educate the public about company policies and safeguards against government abuses, and contribute to an understanding of the scope and scale of online surveillance, network disruptions, content governance, and a host of other practices impacting our fundamental rights. In 2010, Google released the first transparency report, and since then the practice has proliferated, increasing to 70 companies to date.

Given Zoom's increasing role and user base, it is imperative that you issue a regular transparency report. According to your website, you are the "leader in modern enterprise video communications," and Bernstein Research analysts reported that Zoom has gained more users so far this year than in all of 2019. This trend is likely to continue as more people rely on video conferencing services to carry on in their work and lives.

The growing demand for your services makes Zoom a target for third parties, from law enforcement to malicious hackers, seeking personal data and sensitive information. Meanwhile, as people gather online, these assemblies will [draw scrutiny from authorities](#) looking to control the flow of information. This is why disclosing only privacy policies is not enough — it is necessary for Zoom to also disclose its



policies and procedures protecting the data and accounts of everyone interacting with its services through a regular transparency report.

We fully agree with your [statement](#) from the World Economic Forum in Davos, that, “Data trust and transparency are so important.” Therefore, we are calling on you to disclose the following:

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- **The number of government requests for user data you receive by country, with compliance rates, and your procedures for responding to these requests;**
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- **The circumstances when you provide user information to government authorities;**
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- **Policies on notice to potentially affected users when their information has been requested or provided to government authorities, or exposed by breach, misuse, or abuse;**
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- **Policies and practices affecting the security of data in transit and at rest, including on multi-factor authentication, encryption, and retention; and**
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- **Policies and practices affecting freedom of expression, including terms of use and content guidelines for account holders and call participants, as well as statistics on enforcement**
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We encourage you to review our Transparency Reporting Index to explore the benefits that transparency reports offer users. We look forward to your response and are happy to continue this conversation about improving Zoom’s policies to better respect human rights.

Sincerely,

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