

US Home Address Privacy Report 2026

How State and Local Public-Record Systems Document Address Privacy, Access and Confidentiality

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A 50-state policy review and purposive audit of 200 local public-record system categories.

The canonical version of record is the HTML edition at <https://info-remover.com/research/us-home-address-privacy-report-2026>. This PDF is a convenience copy of the same content.

Funding and Conflict of Interest Disclosure

This research was conducted and funded by Info Remover, a commercial provider of online content removal, search de-indexing and reputation management services. No external sponsor funded the study. Info Remover has a commercial interest in online privacy and removal-related services, so readers should consider that relationship when interpreting the report. To reduce the risk of selectively reporting favorable results, the study used a frozen research protocol, preserved verification statuses, retained Unknown values, documented exclusions, and subjected proposed headline findings to a separate audit. Findings that did not meet the publication rules were withheld or rejected rather than promoted. The report should therefore be read as company-funded research with disclosed methodology and constraints, not as independent academic research.

Executive Summary

US home address privacy in public records cannot be evaluated through a single website or a simple question about whether records are public. Property assessments, tax information, recorded land documents and court records serve different administrative purposes. Their systems can offer different combinations of online searches, document images, copies and onsite inspection. A published confidentiality procedure may apply to one of those routes without changing the others.

This report examines that documentation through three linked datasets. Dataset A reviews state-level address-confidentiality and privacy-program structures across the 50 U.S. states. Dataset B audits a frozen, purposive sample of 50 local jurisdictions, with four mandatory record categories per jurisdiction and 200 system/category rows. Dataset C examines implementation documentation in 20 jurisdictions selected from the frozen Dataset B pool. The datasets are not interchangeable populations, and the local samples are not nationally representative.

The strongest quantitative findings concern documented access conditions among VERIFIED Dataset B rows with known values for the relevant field. Among 102 such rows with known account requirements, 90 did not require an account, or 88.2%. Among 113 VERIFIED rows with known payment coding, 47 required payment in some or all documented contexts, or 41.6%. Neither result describes all public records, all audited systems or U.S. counties generally.

Access coding also differed between the approved category-specific results. Among 29 VERIFIED property rows with known public-access coding, 24 were coded Yes, or 82.8%. Among 35 VERIFIED court rows with known access coding, 3 were coded Yes, or 8.6%, while 32 were coded Partially. The findings do not establish that property systems offer weaker confidentiality protections than court systems.

Two approved cases illustrate why these distinctions matter. The Harris County Clerk's real-property portal explains that information has been redacted from certain instruments in its online database and distinguishes that database from the official repository. Utah Courts provides the approved documentation-clarity example, documenting 8 of 8 components of the frozen Privacy Guidance Clarity Score framework.

The analytical controls are deliberately conservative. Substantive headline percentages use VERIFIED rows and known values. Unknown values do not become negative findings, and NEEDS REVIEW rows do not become confirmed results merely because an official source was found.

This 2026 edition establishes a documented baseline for possible future editions. It does not measure change over time and does not show that access or privacy procedures improved or worsened compared with earlier years.

Key Findings

Account requirements

Among 102 VERIFIED audit rows where account requirements could be coded, 90 did not require an account (88.2%). The denominator excludes 34 VERIFIED rows coded Unknown

and the 64 rows that were not VERIFIED, out of a planned population of 200 rows.

Payment requirements

Among 113 VERIFIED audit rows with known payment coding, 47 required payment in some or all contexts (41.6%). The numerator combines Yes and Partially coding and should not be read as a claim that every search or document request is charged.

Court-record access

Among 35 VERIFIED court rows with known public-access coding, 3 were coded Yes (8.6%) and 32 were coded Partially. These are audit-slot results, not a count of independent court policies.

Property-record access

Among 29 VERIFIED property rows with known public-access coding, 24 were coded Yes (82.8%). Yes does not mean that every record image, historical document or protected address is publicly available.

Illustrative cases

Harris County is used only as an illustrative boundary between an online database and the official repository. Utah Courts is the approved documentation-clarity example at 8 of 8 components.

Why the denominators stay beside the findings

An audit row is a jurisdiction/category slot, several rows can refer to a shared system, and a VERIFIED row can still carry a justified Unknown. Only four percentages are published: 88.2%, 41.6%, 8.6% and 82.8%.

Figure 1. Account requirements

No account required 90 of 102 (88.2%)



90 of 102 VERIFIED rows with known account-requirement coding (88.2%) did not require an account.

Limitation: Rows coded Unknown are excluded from the denominator. Unknown is not No. No separate finding is claimed for the remaining rows.

Figure 2. Payment requirements

Payment required in some or all contexts 47 of 113 (41.6%)



47 of 113 VERIFIED rows with known payment coding (41.6%) required payment in some or all contexts.

Limitation: Payment coding records whether a documented fee applies in at least one access context. It does not measure fee amounts.

Figure 3. Court record online access



Among 35 VERIFIED court rows with known access coding, 3 were coded Yes (8.6%) and 32 were coded Partially. No percentage is published for the Partially count.

Limitation: Coding reflects documented online availability only. Partially covers indexes, limited images or restricted remote access.

Figure 4. Property record online access



24 of 29 VERIFIED property rows with known access coding (82.8%) were coded Yes.

Limitation: Property systems were the most consistently documented category. No label is assigned to the remaining rows.

Figure 5. Utah Courts documentation clarity



Utah Courts documented 8 of 8 components of the Privacy Guidance Clarity Score, reported as a count rather than a percentage.

Limitation: This score measures whether guidance is documented, not whether a protection is safe, effective or high quality.

1. Why Home-Address Privacy in Public Records Is Complicated

A residential address can appear in different administrative contexts. A property system may identify a parcel and its assessment information. A tax system may distinguish the property being taxed from a mailing destination. A recorded instrument may contain text and images supplied when a transaction was recorded. Court information may exist in an index, a docket, a filed document or a restricted access service.

That distinction matters when someone encounters a public-facing search result. Changing a structured database field does not demonstrate that a scanned image changed, and an index may be online while the associated document requires a further step.

The responsible authority also needs to be identified. A county website can link to a statewide judicial service or to a system run by a different agency, and in some settings municipal rather than county offices hold the relevant function.

Privacy procedures add another layer. Enrollment in a state address-confidentiality program, acceptance of a substitute address, restriction of online display and redaction of a filed

document are different actions with different eligibility and scope.

2. What We Studied

Dataset A is a state-level review covering the 50 U.S. states. All state rows remained NEEDS REVIEW for publication clearance, so Dataset A is used descriptively and no verified-only state prevalence headline is derived from it.

Dataset B contains 50 purposively selected local jurisdictions and 200 mandatory audit rows: property assessor/property records, property tax, recorder/land records and court records for each jurisdiction. It was frozen before local policy research and is not a probability sample.

Dataset C is a 20-jurisdiction deep dive into state-to-local implementation, drawn from the frozen Dataset B pool using outcome-blind SHA-256 ordering within frozen region and size quotas. Only Dataset C used that hash procedure; Dataset B did not.

Across the datasets, the object of study is official policy and system documentation. No personal record searches were submitted, no accounts were created, no payments were made and no restriction was circumvented.

3. State-Level Address Privacy and Confidentiality

The state review distinguishes a main Address Confidentiality Program from additional or narrower statutory programs, so that an employee-specific shield, a voter-focused procedure and a broader program are not presented as identical coverage.

A substitute-address model can provide a designated address for use in specified contexts. Acceptance of a substitute address is different from removal of information already held in a record.

State-level authority is relevant to local implementation but does not settle it. Evidence that a program exists does not establish that a recorder links its procedure or that a court record changes automatically after enrollment.

This report consequently makes no state-program prevalence claim and publishes no program count.

4. Local Public-Record Access

The local audit records public access, account requirements and payment requirements as separate fields. A system can permit a public search while requiring an account for another service, and a charge can apply to copies rather than browsing.

Yes applies to the relevant system in the scope established by evidence. Partially preserves a limitation rather than forcing a mixed condition into Yes or No. Neither value means a person's address was located; this audit did not perform that test.

Shared systems and shared policies were recorded with identifiers and deduplicated, so a single statewide platform used by several counties is not counted as several independent findings.

5. Property Records

Property systems were the most consistently documented category. Among 29 VERIFIED property rows with known public-access coding, 24 were coded Yes (82.8%).

That consistency is not a privacy conclusion. Documented online access means the system describes an online route, not that a specific residential address is displayed, indexed by search engines or ineligible for a confidentiality procedure. Two VERIFIED property rows remained Unknown and are excluded rather than recoded.

Harris County: an illustrative boundary case. The Harris County Clerk's real-property portal explains that information has been redacted from certain instruments in its online database and distinguishes that database from the official repository, which remains subject to separate rules and request procedures. It is presented as an illustrative boundary case, not as a measured rate.

6. Court Records

Among 35 VERIFIED court rows with known access coding, 3 were coded Yes (8.6%) and 32 were coded Partially. Partially dominates because court systems frequently publish an index or docket while restricting document images, remote access or particular case types.

This does not establish that court records are more private than property records. The two results use different eligible row sets and describe documented online access scope, not sensitivity or remedy availability.

Several audited counties use a statewide judicial platform, so the 35 rows are audit slots rather than 35 independent court policies.

7. Payment and Account Barriers

Among 102 VERIFIED rows with known account coding, 90 did not require an account (88.2%). Among 113 VERIFIED rows with known payment coding, 47 required payment in some or all documented contexts (41.6%).

Those two denominators are not the same set of rows and cannot be combined into a joint access statistic without a separately approved analysis.

Fees and accounts are administrative access conditions, not confidentiality mechanisms. The absence of a login or fee does not tell you what a system displays, and the presence of a fee is not a privacy protection.

8. Privacy Remedies Are Different From Record Access

Access coding answers what a system documents about reaching a record. A privacy remedy answers what can be withheld, redacted, suppressed or substituted, for whom, in which records.

Four distinct remedy types appear in the documentation reviewed: correction of inaccurate information, confidentiality or protected-address status, redaction or suppression of specified data elements, and restriction of online display only.

Correction is the remedy most often documented and the most easily misread. A route for fixing an incorrect mailing address does not establish a route for withholding an accurate residential address. Where guidance is silent on existing or historical records, the report

records that silence rather than inferring an outcome.

9. State-to-Local Implementation

Dataset C examined how state-level rules appear, or fail to appear, in local documentation across 20 jurisdictions drawn from the frozen Dataset B pool.

The central observation is structural: a state program can be well documented at state level while the local agency holding a record publishes nothing about how that program affects its own systems. Where the link is missing, the evidence is incomplete in both directions.

Because the deep dive's aggregate scoring results did not clear the publication rules, no Dataset C prevalence figure, local recognition rate or aggregate clarity statistic is published. Only the approved Utah Courts example is published.

10. Privacy Guidance Clarity Score

The Privacy Guidance Clarity Score is a 0 to 8 documentation measure. One point is awarded for each documented component: a guidance page, a dedicated process or form, stated eligibility criteria, required documents, a submission method, treatment of existing records, treatment of historical records, and contact information.

Utah Courts is the approved example, documenting 8 of 8 components in its applicable statewide judicial guidance. That is statewide court guidance, not a county policy, even though the selection identifier references the sampled county.

The clarity score measures documentation clarity only. It is not a measure of privacy risk, safety, effectiveness or protection quality. A jurisdiction can document a weak procedure clearly, or a strong procedure poorly.

11. What the Research Does Not Show

- It does not show national prevalence. Dataset B is purposive and non-probability, so there is no margin of error and no estimate for U.S. counties generally.
- It does not show that any address is or is not exposed. No person searches were performed and no real residential address was tested.
- It does not show whether a confidentiality request would succeed, how long it takes, or whether an agency applies its documented procedure consistently.
- It does not show change over time. This edition is a baseline.
- It does not show that Unknown means No. Unknown is excluded from denominators rather than recoded.
- It does not show a state-program prevalence figure. Dataset A rows remained NEEDS REVIEW for publication clearance.
- It does not measure privacy risk, safety, protection quality or effectiveness.

12. Implications

For individuals, "is this record public?" is the wrong first question. The useful questions are which agency controls the record, which access route is described, and whether a

documented remedy covers new submissions, existing records, historical material or online display alone.

For agencies, documentation quality and access design are separable. The eight clarity components describe what a complete public explanation looks like without prescribing any particular policy.

For researchers and journalists, the denominators matter more than the headlines. Each of the four published percentages describes a different eligible row set.

13. What to Do if Your Home Address Appears in a Public Record

The following framework reflects what the audited systems actually document. Each step can be carried out by an individual.

1. Identify the record type. Establish whether the address appears in a property assessment record, a property tax record, a recorder or land record, or a court record. Requests directed at the wrong category are usually refused.
2. Identify the responsible agency or shared system. Find the body that controls the underlying record: a county assessor, recorder, tax office, court clerk, or a shared statewide platform. The website displaying the record is not always its controller.
3. Determine whether the issue is correction or confidentiality. Inaccurate or outdated information may be handled through a correction route. Accurate but sensitive information requires a confidentiality, redaction, suppression or protected-address procedure instead.
4. Check whether an Address Confidentiality Program or other protected-address rule applies. Check eligibility and whether the program covers the specific record category. Participation does not automatically change every existing public record.
5. Distinguish online display from the official underlying record. A portal, an index entry, a scanned image and the official repository can be separate things with separate procedures. In the Harris County example, a redaction in the online database is not necessarily a change to the official repository.
6. Check existing and historical records separately. Prior filings, archived copies and historical images are often handled under different rules. Where official guidance is silent, do not infer retroactive effect.
7. Treat search-engine de-indexing as a separate layer. De-indexing affects search visibility only. It does not delete or amend the government source record, and the two processes succeed or fail independently.

Decision path

1. Which record type is it?
2. Which agency or shared system controls it?
3. Is this a correction issue or a confidentiality issue?
4. Does a protected-address rule cover this record category?
5. Is the problem the online display or the official repository?
6. Are existing and historical copies covered, or only new records?
7. Is search visibility a separate step you still need to address?

This is a research-informed framework, not legal advice and not a promise that any request will succeed. Official guidance for your specific jurisdiction and record type remains primary.

14. Methodology Summary

Dataset A is a 50-state review of address confidentiality and privacy protection structures, structurally complete but cleared for descriptive use only. Dataset B is a purposive sample of 50 local jurisdictions with four mandatory categories each, giving 200 audit rows; it is not statistically representative and carries no margin of error. Dataset C is a 20-jurisdiction implementation deep dive selected from the frozen Dataset B pool by outcome-blind SHA-256 ordering within frozen region and size quotas.

Coding rested on official sources. Search-engine snippets were treated as discovery only, inaccessible evidence was coded Unknown, and Unknown is never converted to No. Shared systems and policies were deduplicated. Rows carry VERIFIED, NEEDS REVIEW or UNVERIFIED status, and published percentages use VERIFIED rows with known coding only.

The protocol and the Dataset B sample were frozen on September 7, 2026, before Dataset B policy research began.

15. Data, Sources and Reproducibility

The curated public release contains 201 records: all 200 Dataset B record identities and one approved Dataset C record for Utah Courts. Dataset B status counts are 136 VERIFIED, 53 NEEDS REVIEW and 11 UNVERIFIED. Substantive values are published where the row is VERIFIED; literal Unknown values remain Unknown. The four published percentages can be reproduced directly from the file.

Curated data (CSV):

<https://info-remover.com/research/data/us-home-address-privacy-report-2026.csv>

Methodology:

<https://info-remover.com/research/us-home-address-privacy-report-2026/methodology>

No license is claimed or asserted for the dataset, and no DOI has been issued. The HTML edition is the canonical version of record.

Suggested citation: Milan Eedel Bloedt, US Home Address Privacy Report 2026. Info Remover, September 10, 2026.

16. About Info Remover

Info Remover is a commercial provider of online content removal, search de-indexing and reputation management services. This report was produced and funded internally and is published as company-funded original research with a disclosed methodology. It is not independent academic research and was not sponsored externally.

The report is informational. It does not provide legal advice, does not assess an individual's circumstances, and nothing in it should be read as a promise that any record, listing or search result can be removed.

Endnotes

1. Published percentages use VERIFIED Dataset B rows with known coding for the field in question. Denominators differ by field because evidence availability differs.
2. Account requirements: 90 of 102 (88.2%). Excludes 34 VERIFIED rows coded Unknown and 64 non-VERIFIED rows.
3. Payment requirements: 47 of 113 (41.6%), combining Yes and Partially coding. Excludes 23 VERIFIED rows coded Unknown and 64 non-VERIFIED rows.
4. Court access: 3 of 35 Yes (8.6%) and 32 of 35 Partially, among VERIFIED court rows with known access coding.
5. Property access: 24 of 29 Yes (82.8%); 2 VERIFIED property rows coded Unknown are excluded.
6. Harris County is used solely as an illustrative boundary case, based on the county clerk's published explanation of its real-property portal.
7. Utah Courts documented 8 of 8 Privacy Guidance Clarity Score components in statewide judicial guidance. Documentation clarity only.
8. Dataset B was not hash-selected. Only Dataset C used outcome-blind SHA-256 ordering within frozen quotas.
9. All Dataset A state rows remained NEEDS REVIEW for publication clearance; no state prevalence figure is published.
10. Coding reflects official documentation available at the time of research. Government systems and guidance can change after review.