

## **Volunteer Position: Multiple Commissioner Vacancies on Oakland's Municipal Privacy Advisory Commission**

**Need:** Oakland residents are needed to fill volunteer positions on the City of Oakland's Privacy Advisory Commission, which is the nation's first (and one of only three in California) municipal citizens commissions offering advice and technical support to the city on surveillance technology that has privacy ramifications. 4 seats are currently vacant and at least two more will become vacant in March of 2027, so there is a need for some fresh volunteers. While this is an unpaid position, it is an amazing opportunity to apply privacy principles in practice with real stakes for local communities on a trailblazing civic engagement process begun in 2015.

**Background:** Oakland's Privacy Advisory Commission came about after the city mobilized in opposition to a secretive Homeland Security port safety project that had morphed behind closed doors into a citywide surveillance gauntlet. After two years of activism, that included 80+ organizations signed on in support, multiple 5+ hours public comment sessions, and nationwide publicity, the so-called Domain Awareness Center was dramatically scaled back and placed under the control of an ad-hoc citizens commission, which became the PAC. (Privacy Advisory Commission). The PAC became a formal city commission in 2016.

**What You'll Do:** The PAC has (or is supposed to have) 9 members (one per district, an at-large and a mayoral appointment) and meets once a month on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday from 5-7pm. Between meetings, members are expected to digest documents (usually pending policies and annual reports) and may occasionally do ad-hoc meetings in between (usually on Zoom) when issues need a deeper dive. The PAC is empowered by ordinance to review the deployment of any technology with privacy implications in the City and offer guidance to the Council, and to review mandated annual reports.

**Qualifications:** The PAC is intended to be a citizens commission, not a consulting firm, so you can and should bring lived experiences to the table. Things that it may be helpful to be familiar with include municipal processes like the Brown Act, Oakland's geography and demographics, state privacy laws, concepts like disparate impact, and general understanding of technology. But a willingness to learn is the most important thing. And you do need to currently reside in the City of Oakland.

**How To Apply:** Commissioners are appointed by a city council member subject to approval by the mayor. The application is online (<https://oakland.granicus.com/boards/w/8552f8c4c0e15460/boards/11232>)

But Oakland Privacy, the advocacy group that was largely responsible for the creation of the Commission would very much like to help you with your application and with reaching out to a council member to facilitate your nomination, so please reach out to us first at [contact@oaklandprivacy.org](mailto:contact@oaklandprivacy.org) so we know you are intending to apply.

Background: The following page on the City of Oakland website provides more information on the Commission.

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/Government/Boards-Commissions/Privacy-Advisory-Commission>