

Executive Order 13960: Promoting the Use of Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence in the Federal Government

December 8th, 2020

Summary:

[Executive Order 13960](#) was issued by President Trump in December 2020. The order outlines nine principles for the ethical use of artificial intelligence in government. National security systems and AI embedded within commercial products are exempt from these principles. It also directs OMB to help implement these principles across the federal government and established agency AI use case inventories.

Principles for Use of AI in Government

Executive Order 13960 established the following principles for the ethical use of AI in the federal government. Many of these principles would be echoed in President Biden's Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights two years later.

Lawful and respectful of our Nation's values. Agencies shall design, develop, acquire, and use AI in a manner that exhibits due respect for our Nation's values and is consistent with the Constitution and all other applicable laws and policies, including those addressing privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

Purposeful and performance-driven. Agencies shall seek opportunities for designing, developing, acquiring, and using AI, where the benefits of doing so significantly outweigh the risks, and the risks can be assessed and managed.

Accurate, reliable, and effective. Agencies shall ensure that their application of AI is consistent with the use cases for which that AI was trained, and such use is accurate, reliable, and effective.

Safe, secure, and resilient. Agencies shall ensure the safety, security, and resiliency of their AI applications, including resiliency when confronted with systematic vulnerabilities, adversarial manipulation, and other malicious exploitation.

Understandable. Agencies shall ensure that the operations and outcomes of their AI applications are sufficiently understandable by subject matter experts, users, and others, as appropriate.

Responsible and traceable. Agencies shall ensure that human roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, understood, and appropriately assigned for the design, development, acquisition, and use of AI. Agencies shall ensure that AI is used in a manner consistent with these Principles and the purposes for which each use of AI is intended. The design, development, acquisition, and use of AI, as well as relevant inputs and outputs of particular AI applications, should be well documented and traceable, as appropriate and to the extent practicable.

Regularly monitored. Agencies shall ensure that their AI applications are regularly tested against these Principles. Mechanisms should be maintained to supersede, disengage, or deactivate existing applications of AI that demonstrate performance or outcomes that are inconsistent with their intended use or this order.

Transparent. Agencies shall be transparent in disclosing relevant information regarding their use of AI to appropriate stakeholders, including the Congress and the public, to the extent practicable and in accordance with applicable laws and policies, including with respect to the protection of privacy and of sensitive law enforcement, national security, and other protected information.

Accountable. Agencies shall be accountable for implementing and enforcing appropriate safeguards for the proper use and functioning of their applications of AI, and shall monitor, audit, and document compliance with those safeguards. Agencies shall provide appropriate training to all agency personnel responsible for the design, development, acquisition, and use of AI.