Research Ethics: Duty to Inform Protocol

AICAREAGENTS247 Research Ethics: Duty to Inform Protocol

California-Compliant Notification Process for Organizations Included in Public Research

Transparency, Consent, and Respect in Community-Based AI Compliance Research

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OVERVIEW

After AICAREAGENTS247 completes research analysis on any organization, we have an **ethical and legal duty to inform** that organization about our findings before publication. This protocol ensures compliance with California research ethics standards, respects organizational autonomy, and builds trust with the communities we serve.

THE DUTY TO INFORM: WHY IT MATTERS

Ethical foundation: Research "on" communities without informing them is extractive and harmful—especially when those communities are already vulnerable to enforcement risk. Even when using only public information, we commit to transparency about:

- What we reviewed
- What we found
- How we will use the data
- How organizations can respond or opt out

Legal foundation: California has the strongest research ethics and data privacy laws in the nation. Our Duty to Inform process ensures compliance with:

1. **California Privacy Rights Act (CPRA):** Requires transparency about data collection and use, even for publicly available information
2. **California Health & Safety Code § 24170-24179:** Requires notification when research involves health-related organizations
3. **Academic research ethics (IRB-equivalent principles):** Respect for persons, beneficence, justice

4. **501(c)(3) public benefit standards:** Research must serve public good, not harm vulnerable organizations

Practical foundation: Organizations we notify often become AICARE users, CCAICO partners, and research collaborators. Treating them with respect from the start builds long-term relationships, not resentment.

WHEN THE DUTY TO INFORM APPLIES

We send notification emails in these situations:

✅ Always notify:

1. **Individual organizational case studies**
   Ifwe conducted a detailed review of oneorganization's AI systems, governance, or compliance status (even from public sources)

2. **Named enforcement actions**
   Ifwe documented an organization's involvement in a public enforcement action and plan to reference it in reports

3. **Sector-specific deep dives**
   Ifwe audited multiple organizations in onesector (e.g., "10 California housing nonprofits") and plan to describe findings in ways that mightbe identifiable

4. **Risk assessments based on public data**
   Ifwe assigned a Red/Yellow/Green risk score based on publicly available information (website, 990s, vendor disclosures)

⚠ Case-by-case decision:

1. **Purely statistical aggregates**
   If an organization is one of 247in a dataset and we only report percentages (e.g., "67% lacked AI policies"), notification may notbe required—but we often notify key organizations anyway as a courtesy

2. **Public enforcement data only**
   Ifwe're simply reporting what CPPA, AG, or DFEH already published publicly (no additional analysis), notification is optionalbut recommended

❌ Do not notify:

1. **Anonymized, non-identifiable data**
   Ifthere is no way to identify the organization (e.g., "a mid-sized clinic in Southern California"), no notification required

2. **General sector observations**
   If we're describing trends without referencing specific organizations (e.g., "nonprofits struggle with bias testing"), no notification required

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THE NOTIFICATION PROCESS (Step-by-Step)
STEP 1: Complete the analysis (Phase 2 of research cycle)

Finish your organizational review, risk assessment, or enforcement documentation. Ensure findings are accurate and evidence-based before notification.

STEP 2: Prepare the notification email (within 7 days of analysis completion)

Use the template below. Customize for:

- Organization type (nonprofit, clinic, faith-based)
- Specific findings (Red/Yellow/Green score, systems identified, gaps observed)
- Sector context (housing, healthcare, education, etc.)

Key elements every notification must include:

1. **Clear subject line** identifying this as research notification
2. **What public informationwereviewed** (sources listed)
3. **Summary of key findings** (brief, neutral, factual)
4. **How data will be used** (anonymized aggregate vs. named case study)
5. **Organization's rights** (opt-out, correct, consult)
6. **Clear statement thisisNOTenforcement** (we are not regulators)
7. **Timeline to respond**(14 days)
8. **Contact information** for questions or consultation

STEP 3: Identify the correct recipients

Send the notification email to:

Primary recipient (at least one):

- Executive Director or CEO(from website or 990)
- Board Chair (if contact infois publicly available)

CC (if known):

- Chief ComplianceOfficer or Risk Manager
- General counsel(iforg has one)

How to find contact info:

- Organization website ("Contact" or "Leadership" pages)
- IRS Form 990 (Part VII lists officers)
- LinkedIn (search for ED/CEO)
- Professional association directories
- If no direct contact found: use general info@ or contact@ email with "ATTN: Executive Director" in subject

If contact info is not public:
Donotuseaggressivemeansto obtain it (no cold-calling board members' personal phones). Instead:

- Note in researchlog:"Notification attempted, no public contact available"
- Proceed with fullyanonymized inclusion only
- If organization latercontacts you, provide retroactive notification

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STEP 4: Send the email

Timing:

- Within 7 days of completing analysis
- During business hours (Tue-Thu, 9am-4pm PT preferred)
- Avoid Mondays (email overload), Fridays (may be missed over weekend), holidays

Delivery:

- Email:aisafelabs@gmail.com
- BCC yourself for records
- Use email tracking (read receipts) if available, but don't rely on it

Subject line examples:

- "Research Notification: AICAREAGENTS247 Public Information Review of [Org Name]"
- "AI Compliance Research Notice for [Org Name]"
- "Study Participation Notice: California AI Governance Research"

STEP 5: Log the notification

Inyourresearchdatabase(GoogleSheet or similar), record:

Date Sent	Organization Name	Recipient(s)	Email Address(es)	Findings Summary	Response Deadline	Status
2/1/2026	Hope Housing Coalition	Jane Doe, ED	jdoe@hope.org	Red risk, 6 AI systems, no policy	2/15/2026	Sent, awaiting response

Status options:

- Sent, awaiting response
- No response (proceed anonymized)
- Requested consultation (scheduled [date])
- Requested removal (excluded from reports)
- Disputed findings (under review)
- Granted permission for named case study

STEP 6: Track responses and take action

If they don't respond within 14 days:

- Proceed with **anonymized inclusion** in aggregate reports (e.g., "a $3M housing nonprofit in Los Angeles County")
- Do NOT name the organization in any public document
- Update research log: "Noresponse, proceeding with anonymization"

If they request removal/opt-out:

- Reply within 24 hoursconfirming removal
- Exclude organizationfrom case studies AND statistical aggregates
- Keep data in internalrecords (marked "excluded from publication") for audit trail
- Update research log:"Opted out, data excluded"

If they request consultation:

- Schedule free 30-45minute call within 7 days
- Use the consultationtoexplain findings, offer AICARE toolkit, answer questions
- After call, send summary email confirming what was discussed
- Update research log:"Consultation completed [date], [outcome]"

If they dispute findings:

- Request specificcorrections and supporting evidence
- Review their evidence carefully and objectively
- If they're right, correct your records and send updated summary
- If your findings stand, explain your methodology and offer to include their perspective in reports (e.g., footnote: "Organization disputes this characterization and states...")
- Update research log: "Dispute received, [resolution]"

If they grant permission for named case study:

- Request explicit written permission via email (keep forever)
- Confirm what can be shared (organization name, findings, quotes, data)
- Send draft case study for their review before publication
- Update research log: "Named case study permission granted [date]"

NOTIFICATION EMAIL TEMPLATE (Ready to Customize)

Use this template for all Duty to Inform notifications. Customize the bracketed sections.

Subject: Research Notification: AICAREAGENTS247 Public Information Review of [Organization Name]

Dear [Executive Director Name / "Executive Leadership Team" if name unknown],

This email serves as formal notification that **AICAREAGENTS247**, a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit research organization, has conducted a public information review of **[Organization Name]** as part of our ongoing research on AI safety and compliance in California community organizations.

What We Reviewed

We analyzed publicly available information, including:

- Your organization's website and public communications
- IRS Form 990 filings (most recent: [year])
- [Other sources: publicly disclosed technology vendors, enforcement records, news articles, association reports, etc.]

We did **not** access any non-public, confidential, or protected information. All data came from sources available to any member of the public.

Key Findings

Basedonourreview, here is a summary of what we observed:

AI and automated systems identified: [List systems found examples:]

- Donor CRM with predictive analytics ([Vendor name])
- Email marketing platform with algorithmicoptimization ([Vendor name])
- [Other systems: chatbots, scheduling tools,casemanagement, etc.]
- **Total systemswithpotentialAIfeatures:[X]**

Compliance andgovernancestatus: [Neutral,factualobservations examples:]

- No publicly available AI governance policyorboard documentation
- No evidence of bias testing or algorithmicimpactassessments
- [Other observations based on public info]

Risk assessment: Based on California's currentAIenforcement landscape and the systems we identified, your organization appears to be in the**[Red/Yellow / Green] risk category** for AI compliance.

- **Red** = High exposure: Multiple undocumentedAIsystems, no visible governance, vulnerable to enforcement scrutiny
- **Yellow** = Moderate exposure: Some AI governance steps visible, but significant gaps remain
- **Green** = Low exposure: Strong governance foundations, documentation, and board oversight evident

[Include 1-2 sentences of context: "This does not mean enforcement is imminent, but it indicates areas where regulators or auditors would likely ask questions if they reviewed your organization."]

How This Information Will Be Used
Anonymized aggregate research (default):

- Your organization's data will be included in statistical reports on California [sector] AI compliance
- Example: "67% of organizations in our study lacked documented AI governance policies"
- **We will NOT name your organization** in any report, policy brief, or case study without your explicit written permission

Potential named case study (requires your permission):

- If your organization's experience would be valuableto share with peers, policymakers, or funders, we may requestpermission to feature you as a named case study This is entirelyoptional and
- requires your written consent We will sendyouadraft for review before any publication
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Our research goals:

- Inform Californiapolicymakers about implementation challenges and enforcement patterns
- Provide freecompliance tools (AICARE toolkits) to the nonprofit, clinic, and faith-based sectors
- Document whatAIgovernance looks like in practice for community organizations
- Advocate forgraceperiods, technical assistance funding, and simplified standards for small organizations

What we will NOT do:

- Report your organization to regulators or enforcement agencies
- Share findings with third parties without your consent
- Use this research for commercial gain (we are a nonprofit)

Your Rights

You have the following options:

1. Request anonymization (automatic, no action needed): If you take no action, we will proceed with anonymized inclusion in aggregate reports as described above.

2. Request full removal/opt-out: If you prefer, we can exclude your organization from all public research outputs (including anonymized statistics). Reply to this email with "Request removal" and we will comply within 5 business days.

3. Request correction: If you believe our findings contain errors or lack important context (e.g., "We actually do have an AI governance policy, it's just not on our website"), please reply with clarifying information. We will review and update our records accordingly.

4. Request a free consultation: We offer a **free 30-minute consultation** to discuss our findings, answer your questions, and provide recommendations from our AICARE [Healthcare / Nonprofit / Faith-Based] Survival Kit. No obligation. Reply to schedule.

5. Grant permission for named case study (optional): If you believe your organization's story could help others and you're willing to be named, let us know. We'll send a consent form and draft a case study for your review.

What This Is NOT

Tobe absolutely clear:

- ❌ This is **not** an enforcement action, audit, or regulatory investigation - ❌ This is **not** a legal threat or demand letter - ❌ We are **not** affiliated with any government agency (CPPA, Attorney General, DFEH, etc.) - ❌ This is **not** a solicitation for paid services (though we do offer free tools and optional paid
    training)

This is a research notification required by California ethics standards. We are informing you as a courtesy and to respect your autonomy.

Next Steps

Ifyouwanttodiscuss, correct, or opt out: Reply to this email within **14 days** ([Date 14 days from send date]).

Ifwedon't hear from you: We will proceed with anonymized inclusion in our research as described above.

Free resources available now (no consultation required):

- Download the AICARE [Sector] Survival Kit: [link]
- Take the free AI Readiness Assessment: [link]
- Learn about CCAICO™ compliance officer training: [link]

Contact Information
Questions or concerns?
Reply to this email or contact:

RAYFIELDTREMONT JOHNSON III
Director of Research
AICAREAGENTS247
aisafelabs@gmail.com

213-679-5177

About AICAREAGENTS247:
AICAREAGENTS247 is California's first nonprofit research lab dedicated to AI safety and compliance infrastructure for community organizations. We provide free toolkits, compliance training (CCAICO™), and policy research to help nonprofits, clinics, and congregations survive California's AI enforcement wave without $300/hour lawyers.

Thank you for the essential work you do serving California communities. Our research exists to support organizations like yours in navigating new AI regulations without compromising your mission.

We look forward to hearing from you if you'd like to discuss these findings further.

Respectfully,

RAYFIELD TREMONT JOHNSON III
Director of Research
AICAREAGENTS247
California 501(c)(3) Public Benefit Corporation

This notification is sent in compliance with California research ethics standards and AICAREAGENTS247's commitment to transparency, respect, and community partnership in all research activities.

HANDLING COMMON RESPONSES

Response Type 1: "We want to be removed from your research."

Your reply (within 24 hours):

Subject: Re: Research Notification – Removal Confirmed

Dear [Name],

Thank you for your response. We have removed [Organization Name] from all public research outputs, including anonymized statistical reports.

Your data will remain in our internal research files (marked "excluded from publication") solely for audit and compliance purposes, but will not be published or shared externally in any form.

If you change your mind in the future or would like to access our free AICARE toolkit, please feel free to reach out.

Best regards,
[Your Name]

Action: Update research database status to "Opted out, excluded from all publication."

Response Type 2: "Your findings are wrong. We DO have an AI policy."
Your reply (within 24 hours):

Subject: Re: Research Notification – Request for Clarification

Dear [Name],

Thank you for this important correction. Our review was based solely on publicly available information, and it's entirely possible we missed documentation that exists internally or is not publicly posted.

To update our records accurately, could you please share:

1. A copy of your AI governance policy (or a summary), if you're comfortable doing so, OR
2. Confirmation that a policy exists and the approximate date it was adopted by your board

We will update our findings accordingly and send you a revised summary within 5 business days.

We appreciate you taking the time to ensure our research is accurate.

Best regards,
[Name]

Action:

- Review the evidence they provide
- If legitimate, update your records and send corrected summary
- If you still believe your findings stand (e.g., their "policy" is one sentence in board minutes, not a real governance framework), explain your methodology respectfully

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Response Type 3: "Can you explain this more? I don't understand what you mean by 'AI systems.'"
Our reply (within 24 hours):

Subject: Re: Research Notification – Happy to Explain

Dear [Name],

Great question—this is exactly why we do this research. Most community organizations don't realize they're using "AI" because it's embedded invisibly in everyday tools.

I'd be happy to schedule a free 30-minute call to walk through:

- Which systems we identified and why they count as "AI" under California law
- What your Red/Yellow/Green risk score means in practical terms
- The first 3-5 steps you can take to reduce exposure

Are you available [offer 3 time slots]?

In the meantime, here's a quick answer:

Systems we identified as "AI-enabled": [List with brief explanations]

- [Donor CRM name]: Uses predictive analytics to score donors and recommend outreach timing
- [Email platform name]: Uses algorithms to optimize send times and predict engagement
- [etc.]

Under California law (SB 942, AB 853), these count as "automated decision systems" subject to transparency and bias-testing requirements.

Let me know if a call would be helpful, or feel free to ask questions via email.

Best regards,
[Your Name]

Action: Schedule consultation, convert to AICARE user.

Response Type 4: "We'd like to be a named case study. How does that work?"
Your reply (within 24 hours):

Subject: Re: Research Notification – Named Case Study Process

Dear [Name],

Thank you for being willing to share your organization's experience with the broader community. Named case studies are incredibly valuable for helping peers, funders, and policymakers understand AI governance in practice.

Here's how the process works:

Step 1: Permission and scope
I'll send you a consent formspecifying:

- What information wecan share (organization name, findings, quotes, data points)
- What will remain confidential (financial details, internal conflicts, sensitive client data, etc.)
- Where the case studywill be published (research reports, policy briefs, AICARE toolkit examples)

Step 2: Interview (optional)
Ifhelpful, we can schedule a45-60 minute interview to get more context beyond what's in public records. This is optional.

Step 3: Draft review
We'll write a draft casestudy (3-5 pages) and send it to you for review. You can request edits, corrections, or redactions beforepublication.

Step 4: Publication
Once you approve,wepublish the case study and credit your organization appropriately.

Timeline: Typically3-4weeks from consent to publication.

What you get:

- A professionally written case study you can use for board reports, grant applications, and public relations
- Recognition as a leader in responsible AI governance
- Free AICARE toolkit and priority access to CCAICO training

Are you ready to move forward? Reply "yes" and I'll send the consent form.

Best regards,
[Your Name]

Action: Send consent form, schedule interview, produce high-quality case study.

DOCUMENTATION AND AUDIT TRAIL

EveryDutytoInformnotificationmustbeloggedfortransparency and accountability.

What to log (minimum):

Field	Example
Date Sent	2/1/2026 Hope Housing Coalition Housing /
Organization Name	Homelessness Services $3.2M Jane Doe,
Sector	Executive Director jdoe@hopehousing.org Red
Budget (from 990)	risk, 6 AI systems, no governance policy 2/15/2026
Recipient Name(s)	2/8/2026 – requested consultation Scheduled
Recipient Email(s)	consultation 2/12, sent AICARE toolkit
Findings Summary	Anonymized in Q1 report, consultation completed
Response Deadline	
Response Received	
Action Taken	
Final Status	

Where to store:

- GoogleSheet: "Research_Duty_to_Inform_Log"
- Backup:Export monthly to PDF, store in Google Drive research folder
- Email records: Keep all notification emails and responses in dedicated Gmail folder "Research Notifications"

Retention:

- Keep logs and email records for minimum 7 years (standard nonprofit record retention)
- If organization requests removal, keep internal record of request and compliance but do not publish

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LEGAL AND ETHICAL COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

Before sending any Dutyto Inform notification weverify:

- ☐ Analysis is complete and findings are evidence-based
- ☐ Public sources are documented and cited
- ☐ Notification email includes all required elements (what, how, rights, timeline, contact)
- ☐ Recipients are appropriate (ED, Board Chair, compliance officer)
- ☐ Email clearly states this is NOT enforcement
- ☐ Email offers opt-out, correction, and consultation options
- ☐ Notification is logged in research database
- ☐ Email sent within 7 days of analysis completion

If any box is unchecked, we do not send notification until resolved.

CONCLUSION: WHY THIS PROTOCOL MATTERS

TheDutytoInformisnotbureaucraticredtape—it'stheethicalfoundationofcommunity-based research.

For organizations:
They deserve to knowwhen they're included in research, what was found, and how data will be used. This respects theirautonomy and dignity.

For AICAREAGENTS247:
Transparency builds trust.Organizations we notify often become AICARE users, CCAICO partners, donors, and advocates. Treating them with respect from the start creates long-term relationships, not resentment or legal risk.

For funders and policymakers:
Arigorous Duty to Inform processproves our research is ethical, credible, and community-centered—not extractive or exploitative. This makes our findings more trustworthy and our recommendations more legitimate.

Bottom line:
Research"on"vulnerable communities without their knowledge is harmful. Research "with" communities, conductedtransparently and respectfully, is transformative.

The DutytoInform is how we choose the latter.

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COPYRIGHT AND TRANSPARENCY DISCLOSURE

This publication and all associated materials are part of the CCAICO Partner Kit and its related AI compliance and governance programs. Every component including written content, visuals, system frameworks, and training processes is thoroughly documented and maintained in secure organizational archives. All documentation and development processes are available upon formal request for verification, audit, or educational purposes.

In accordance with California transparency and ethical governance standards, our organization adheres to an open creation and disclosure policy. We provide clear insight into how all materials are conceived, developed, and implemented — from our books and compliance frameworks to our operational systems and educational resources.

We also conduct regular training sessions aligned with the same methodologies outlined in this publication. These sessions ensure accuracy, consistent application, and accountability throughout all programs and partner organizations.

This approach reflects our ongoing commitment to ethical authorship, responsible AI governance, and public accessibility under California law, including SB 942, SB 1120, AB 2013, and related compliance frameworks.

For documentation or process access requests, please contact:
AICAREAGENTS247@gmail.com
Subject Line: "California Transparency Request: Documentation Access"

FOUNDER'S WORD

"Our mission has never been rooted in technology alone, but in trust, responsibility, and service. Every framework we create is built to uphold the public good ensuring that innovation strengthens communities rather than distances them. Transparency is not simply a policy for us; it is a principle of governance, a promise of accountability, and the standard by which we measure progress. Through every toolkit, training, and guide, we reaffirm one truth: ethical innovation is not optional, it is California's legacy and our shared duty to protect it."

Rayfield Tremont Johnson III
Founder, AICAREAGENTS247™