

# Open Government Definition

[Return to Open Government Data \(The Book\)](#)

*The 8 Principles of Open Government Data were authored by a working group convened by Carl Malamud on December 8, 2007 in Sebastopol, California. The 8 Principles can be found at <https://opengovdata.io/2014/8-principles/>.*

*Though these principles were written early in the open government data movement, they continue to be relevant. Parts are, however, admittedly U.S.-centric, especially the principle regarding licensing. See [No Discrimination and License-Free](#) for a discussion. The principles also neglected to mention cost and that availability meant digitally over the Internet.*

*Government data shall be considered open if the data are made public in a way that complies with the principles below:*

- 1. Data Must Be **Complete**. All public data are made available. Data are electronically stored information or recordings, including but not limited to documents, databases, transcripts, and audio/visual recordings. Public data are data that are not subject to valid privacy, security or privilege limitations, as governed by other statutes.*
- 2. Data Must Be **Primary**. Data are published as collected at the source, with the finest possible level of granularity, not in aggregate or modified forms.*
- 3. Data Must Be **Timely**. Data are made available as quickly as necessary to preserve the value of the data.*
- 4. Data Must Be **Accessible**. Data are available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes.*
- 5. Data Must Be **Machine Processable**. Data are reasonably structured to allow automated processing of it.*
- 6. Access Must Be **Non-Discriminatory**. Data are available to anyone, with no requirement of registration.*
- 7. Data Formats Must Be **Non-Proprietary**. Data are available in a format over which no entity has exclusive control.*
- 8. Data Must Be **License-free**. Data are not subject to any copyright, patent, trademark or trade secret regulation. Reasonable privacy, security and privilege restrictions may be allowed as governed by other statutes.*

*Finally, compliance must be reviewable.*

- A contact person must be designated to respond to people trying to use the data.*
- A contact person must be designated to respond to complaints about violations of the principles.*
- An administrative or judicial court must have the jurisdiction to review whether the agency has applied these principles appropriately.*

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