JUST TECH

NEWS

Public Agencies' Use of Biometrics to Prevent Fraud and Abuse: Risks and Alternatives – Center for Democracy and Technology

By Hannah Quay-de la Vallee
June 7, 2022

One unexpected consequence of the COVID pandemic has been to accelerate public agencies' reliance on biometric technology to verify identities. The pandemic increased the number of people seeking and qualifying for benefits and led to an expansion of benefits available in order to offer assistance to those struggling with the wave of job loss and other economic and social difficulties. These expanded benefits also led to a significant increase in attempted fraud, both of traditional individual fraudulent actors and of organized crime and nation-state actors engaging in large-scale fraud. The issue of fraud in pandemic-related benefits even drew the attention of the Biden administration, which released a fact sheet on steps to combat fraud and identity theft in connection with pandemic relief programs. Additionally, the increase in benefits led to challenges in delivering services in an efficient way, as existing systems were not designed for the volume of applicants. This led to long wait times for individuals looking to receive benefits.

[…]

Source: Public Agencies' Use of Biometrics to Prevent Fraud and Abuse: Risks and Alternatives – Center for Democracy and Technology