

Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) — PRC, 2021

PIPL regulates collection, processing, and transfer of personal information to protect individuals' privacy and ensure accountability.



What it is

The China Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) is a comprehensive data protection regulation that establishes requirements for the collection, processing, and transfer of personal information in order to safeguard individuals' privacy rights. The law aims to enhance the protection of personal data, mitigate cybersecurity risks, and ensure organizations operate with transparency and accountability.

Issued by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, PIPL applies to organizations and individuals processing personal information within China, as well as entities outside China handling data of Chinese residents. It covers key areas such as data minimization, consent, cross-border data transfers, individual rights, and internal privacy governance, aligning in some respects with established frameworks like the EU GDPR.

At a glance

PUBLISHER National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China	TYPE Framework	VERSION Personal Information Protection Law of the People's Republic of China
EFFECTIVE November 1, 2021	DOMAIN Privacy	FAMILY Global Privacy Regulations
REGION China	ADOPTION MODEL Regulatory Compliance	IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY High

Source: https://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/c23934/202112/t20211209_385107.html

Why it matters

- **Strengthen privacy management** Enhance policies and procedures to ensure responsible handling of personal information throughout its lifecycle.
- **Enhance regulatory alignment** Enable organizations to meet Chinese data protection mandates and demonstrate compliance during regulatory inspections.
- **Protect individual rights** Reinforce respect for user consent, data minimization, and user access rights in data collection and processing activities.
- **Reduce legal and reputational risk** Mitigate risks of legal penalties and damage to organizational reputation by following clearly defined regulatory requirements.

How SmartSuite supports PIPL

Personal Data Inventory and Classification Maintain records of personal information, processing purposes, and sensitivity classifications.	Consent and Processing Governance Track consent collection, lawful basis, and purpose limitation for data processing.	Data Subject Rights Management Manage access, correction, deletion, and portability requests with full audit trails.
Cross-Border Data Transfer Controls Track assessments, approvals, and safeguards for transferring personal data outside China.	Data Breach and Regulator Notification Management Monitor data breaches and manage notification obligations to regulators and individuals.	PIPL Privacy Compliance Reporting Provide dashboards showing privacy posture, control coverage, and PIPL compliance readiness.

Common framework mappings

APEC PF

CCPA/CPRA

GDPR

HIPAA

ISO 27701

LGPD

NIST Privacy Framework v1.0

Singapore PDPA

Official resources

China Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) Text
The official legal text of the PIPL as issued by the National People's Congress.
npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/c23934/202112/t20211209_385107.html

Frequently asked questions

- What is the China Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL) used for?**
The PIPL establishes a legal framework for the protection of personal information in China, aiming to safeguard individuals' privacy rights and ensure responsible data handling. It sets out requirements for the collection, processing, use, and cross-border transfer of personal data by organizations and individuals.
- Is compliance with PIPL mandatory?**
Yes, compliance with PIPL is mandatory for organizations and individuals processing personal information within China, as well as for entities outside China that handle data on Chinese residents. Noncompliance may result in significant regulatory penalties, business restrictions, or reputational risks.
- Who does PIPL apply to?**
PIPL applies to any organization or individual processing personal data within China, and also to foreign entities where data processing activities target or involve Chinese residents. This extra-territorial scope means multinational organizations must assess the applicability of PIPL to their global operations.
- What are the key requirements under PIPL?**
Key PIPL requirements include obtaining valid consent from data subjects, implementing data minimization practices, establishing transparency in data processing, deploying technical and organizational security controls, and maintaining clear data governance procedures. Organizations must also respond to data subject rights requests and document processing activities.

How should organizations implement PIPL compliance?

Organizations should operationalize PIPL by establishing privacy management programs, conducting regular data protection impact assessments, enacting robust security measures, and training staff on privacy obligations. Implementation efforts often include updating privacy notices, revising consent mechanisms, and mapping personal data flows.

How does PIPL compare to the EU GDPR?

PIPL shares similarities with the EU GDPR in its focus on individual rights, consent requirements, data minimization, and cross-border data transfer controls. However, PIPL includes specific Chinese regulatory requirements, such as local data storage mandates for certain data types and unique legal bases for processing.

What are ongoing compliance obligations under PIPL?

Ongoing PIPL compliance requires continual monitoring of data processing activities, regular risk assessments, prompt incident response in the event of data breaches, and keeping governance documentation up-to-date. Organizations must address regulatory inspection requests and be prepared to remediate identified non-conformities.

How would SmartSuite support China Personal Information Protection Law (PIPL)?

SmartSuite supports PIPL management by offering tailored control libraries, configurable risk registers, and evidence collection tools for demonstrating compliance. Organizations can manage policy governance, track remediation workflows for non-compliance, and maintain audit readiness through consolidated reporting and documentation modules. This facilitates continuous oversight and supports efficient responses to regulatory audits or inspections.

License included / downloadable: Yes The Personal Information Protection Law is publicly available through official Chinese government publications.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/china-personal-information-protection-law-pipl