

# CUPA-HR Statements and Practices in the Protection of Data Anonymity

For 2017, CUPA-HR made a change from collecting salary data in the aggregate to the incumbent (individual level). Concordantly, we added collection of certain demographic variables (gender, ethnicity, birth year, and years in position) to all our salary surveys. We realize these changes have produced heightened concern around confidentiality of potentially personally identifying information, so we are providing this document to let you know of the procedures we have always undertaken to ensure our data is anonymous, both at the employee level and the institutional level. These safeguards are not new. We have been collecting demographic data at the incumbent level on our *Administrators Survey* for more than 20 years, and we will continue to maintain institutional and employee anonymity in all our reporting for this survey as well as our *Professionals Survey*, *Staff Survey*, and *Faculty Survey*. The following points are provided for clarification of our policies and practices in maintaining data anonymity.

1. **The provision of demographic data (gender, ethnicity, birth year, years in position) is optional.** If institutions do not feel comfortable providing it, they do not have to do so; however, the inclusion of this data will give you and your colleagues the most comprehensive and meaningful data available for higher ed. If institutions choose to provide only salary information, they will still be considered survey participants and will still get the discount on survey results.
2. **We ask for birth year only rather than the entire birth date.** We are interested only in an age estimate. It is not our interest to personally identify employees.
3. **Our data are kept anonymous.** Employee names or numbers are not associated with the data provided. In addition, the only people who see an institution's name associated with the data it provides are the professionally trained members of our research team and the individuals at the institution providing the information.
4. **Data are aggregated for all survey results.** For all survey results, institutions see only aggregated information. We follow [DOJ/FTC safe harbor \(Antitrust Safety Zone\) guidelines](#), so we never publish aggregated information from fewer than five institutions. In other words, none of our reports allows institutions to see demographic data and salary data synchronously for individual employees or other individual institutions.

It is our hope that our policies and practices in protecting the confidentiality of the data you provide will facilitate the provision of this data, thereby enhancing the validity, representiveness, and comprehensiveness of our salary surveys. The value of providing this data is that it allows us to provide institutions with the benchmarking information they need to assess diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at their own campus, and — for the greater good — higher ed as a whole. We are the only organization that now collects comprehensive and representative demographic and salary information across the higher ed employee spectrum: administrators, professionals, staff, and faculty. We are committed to maintaining the anonymity of this information, as we understand that *all* the data we collect (including salary information) is sensitive and is potentially personally identifiable. Understanding



College and University Professional Association for Human Resources

our commitment to confidentiality, we encourage you to provide this data. However, institutions are free to withhold provision of demographic information, and it should not deter any institution from being a participant.

If you have any questions or additional concerns, [Ask Research](#).