

ACLU: Local police tracking cellphones without warrants

By Suzy Khimm, Washington Post

Local police departments across the country are tracking cellphones without a warrant, according to documents obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union.

The ACLU surveyed about 200 state and local law enforcement agencies across the country and found that only a handful of them said they obtained “warrants based on probable cause” before tracking cellphones. Most other agencies had laxer standards for tracking cellphones. In Lincoln, Neb., for instance, local police can obtain the GPS location of cellphone users “without demonstrating probable cause,” the group said in a statement.

As a result, the ACLU concludes that there are “unclear or inconsistent legal standards from town to town that frequently fall short of probable cause,” questioning whether the practice is constitutional.

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