



Institute for
Policy Integrity
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

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NEW REPORT DETAILS EPA ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE POLICY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A [report released today by the Institute for Policy Integrity at NYU School of Law](#) analyzes the Environmental Protection Agency’s new enforcement and compliance policy, which relaxes requirements for a wide array of regulated entities and facilities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy has ramifications for public health and the environment.

The EPA’s changes to its enforcement and compliance policies applied retroactively beginning on March 13 and do not have a set termination date. Many experts have sharply criticized the policy as unreasonable, arguing that it exceeds appropriate relief and debilitates important regulations and reporting requirements. One of its most alarming aspects is the relaxed enforcement of routine monitoring and reporting, which could lead to widespread pollution violations. The policy especially jeopardizes fence-line monitoring, which helps track the air quality around high-polluting industrial facilities often located near low-income and minority communities.

The new report, “[Understanding EPA’s Enforcement and Compliance Policy During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#),” summarizes the policy, clarifies its contours, and describes its potential impacts on public health and the environment.

Jayni Hein, Natural Resources Director at the Institute for Policy Integrity and an author of the report, released the following statement:

“There is no question that this policy opens the door to serious harms. In conjunction with the new Executive Order encouraging deregulation in the wake of the pandemic, this policy weakens important environmental safeguards. Ultimately, EPA maintains discretion in how the policy is applied, and the level of damage caused will depend partially on how the agency acts.”

Hein is available for interviews on these issues.

The report is available at: <https://policyintegrity.org/publications/detail/understanding-epas-enforcement-and-compliance-policy-during-the-covid-19>

The Institute for Policy Integrity also recently launched a [resource that tracks the suspension and altered enforcement of environmental laws and policies](#) by federal, state, and city agencies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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[The Institute for Policy Integrity](#) at New York University School of Law is a non-partisan think tank dedicated to improving the quality of government decisionmaking. The institute produces original scholarly research in the fields of economics, law, and regulatory policy; and advocates for reform before courts, legislatures, and executive agencies.