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## [Regressive Changes Proposed for El Salvador’s Right to Information Law](#)

CLD is concerned that proposed changes to El Salvador’s Law on Access to Public Information will limit transparency and access to information in El Salvador. This is a disappointing development given that the current law is very strong and El Salvador has historically been a regional leader. Thus, on CLD’s RTI Rating, which ranks right to information laws globally ([rti-rating.org](http://rti-rating.org)), El Salvador does very well and is in 11<sup>th</sup> place globally.

*“Reforming a right to information law should be an opportunity to strengthen transparency, in consultation with the public and key stakeholders, based on lessons learned,”* said Toby Mendel, Executive Director of CLD. *“Instead, the Government of El Salvador has chosen to do the opposite and undermine the right to information in El Salvador.”*

Key concerns around the [proposed amendments](#) include:

- Responses to requests for information would no longer need to be provided as soon as possible and the time limit for responding would increase to 20 days. This would cost El Salvador three points on the RTI Rating.
- The sanctions in the law would apply to everyone instead of just government officials. This could potentially expose civil society groups or journalists to sanctions for reporting on information that has already been leaked by a third party.
- The ability of the government and other public entities to reclassify information subject to proactive disclosure obligations would expand, so that it could more easily restrict the automatic disclosure to the public of information.
- There were already problems with the process for selecting members of the access to information oversight body (the Institute for Access to Public Information), in particular in terms of political interference, for example because the president formally appointed all members. However, the amendments would further limit the role of non-governmental actors, including civil society, in nominating candidates.
- The amendments would limit the circumstances in which a requester can come in person to consult physical copies of information directly.

Our updated RTI Rating of the legal framework for RTI in El Salvador based on these amendments is available [here](#).

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