

August 28, 2019

Dan Schulman, President and CEO

CC: Bill Ready, COO

PayPal

2211 North First Street

San Jose, California 95131

Dear Mr. Shulman and Mr. Ready,

We are writing to express our deep concern about Venmo's disregard for the importance of user privacy, and to call on Venmo to make two critical changes to its privacy settings: **make transactions private by default**, and **give users privacy settings for their friend lists**.

As you are likely aware, last year Hang Do Thi Duc, who was at the time a Mozilla Fellow, [exposed](#) the serious implications of Venmo's settings by uncovering how countless Venmo users' drug habits, junk food vices, personal finances, and fights with significant others are available for all to see. Although you made the decision to adjust the rate limit for public data after major news coverage of Do Thi Duc's work, and a subsequent Mozilla [petition](#) that gained over 25,000 signatures, you still have not sufficiently prioritized newsfeed privacy. In recent months, another researcher, Dan Salmon, was able to obtain an [additional 7 million public transactions](#).

Users' transactions are not the only sensitive data Venmo makes public—their friend lists are also exposed to the open web. And while Venmo offers a setting for users to make their transactions private, there is no option for a user to hide their friend list. Despite an EFF [campaign](#) around this issue, Venmo has given no reason for this discrepancy. The list of people with whom you exchange money paints a startlingly clear picture of the people who live, date, and do business with you. Just as Venmo has given users newsfeed privacy settings, it must give them, at a minimum, equivalent friend list privacy settings.

Venmo's disregard for its users' privacy is especially alarming as the company expands. It appears your users may assume that, like their other financial transactions, their activity on Venmo is both private and secure. They might not know that they must change their newsfeed privacy settings—or, in the case of friend lists, that they have no option to do so. As a result, they are vulnerable to stalking, snooping, or hacking with so much of their data available to anyone on the web.

In an era of massive financial data breaches, consumers are [increasingly concerned](#) and Venmo has the opportunity to lead the way by making privacy its default. As two organizations deeply invested in the strength and health of a secure, private, and vibrant internet, we urge you to make these pro-privacy changes.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mozilla

Electronic Frontier Foundation