

Althea Network Privacy FAQ

Althea knows you care about your privacy online. We care about it, too. This FAQ document supplements the Althea [Privacy Policy](#) and sets out more information about how we process your personal information when you use Althea as your Internet service provider (“ISP”) or where Althea software otherwise powers your Internet connectivity through a third-party ISP.

How does the Althea network work?

Althea enables individuals and businesses to participate in a decentralized network. The Althea network helps deliver Internet services to users by linking a source of Internet connectivity to the end user. Althea provides hardware devices that form part of this network as well as the software that runs on those devices, and private parties help deploy them. Private parties may also run Althea software on their own devices. Those devices (whether owned by Althea or not) form connection points in the network called “nodes,” which can generally be divided into two categories:

1. Relay Nodes: Relays are nodes connected to the Althea network through which Internet traffic flows. They may connect to other relay nodes or to a source of Internet connectivity. The primary purpose of relay nodes is enabling connectivity between nodes, and all traffic between relay nodes is end-to-end encrypted.
2. Exit Nodes: Exit nodes, which may be a device in the physical Althea network or hosted on a datacenter available over the Internet, decrypt user traffic from relay nodes and route that traffic to the broader Internet.

For more detail about how the network works, view our whitepaper [here](#).

Who is involved in the decentralized Althea network?

Relay nodes could be installed by anyone (individuals or businesses) who wants to buy Internet access on Althea or earn money for forwarding traffic. Our Privacy Policy only covers Althea’s activities with respect to relay nodes, not the activities of the entities who install or maintain them.

Exit nodes may be operated by Althea or a third-party ISP. If you buy Internet access from such a third-party ISP, that ISP’s privacy policy governs how it processes your personal information. Althea’s Privacy Policy only applies to Althea’s activities with respect to exit nodes powered by Althea software.

What are Althea’s privacy practices with respect to relay nodes and exit nodes on the Althea network?

1. Relay and exit nodes. Since the traffic flowing through relay nodes is encrypted, Althea does not have visibility into the Internet traffic flowing through a given relay node.

However, in order to maintain, support, improve, and provide the network, Althea does collect and use information relating to all nodes running the Althea software. This information includes, for example, whether the device is online and connected to the larger network, traffic data (e.g., how much bandwidth it is using), payments made, and details about the local wireless network, including what devices are connected to the WiFi and the wireless signal quality. Users may be able to opt out of certain monitoring on their router dashboard. If you do opt out, a minimal amount of monitoring may persist (for example, the fact that a device is online and its connectivity to other devices, so Althea can diagnose and troubleshoot if the device loses connectivity).

2. Exit nodes. Where Althea controls exit nodes, Althea processes network traffic data, performance data, technical support data, and the websites you visit (“Internet Usage Data”) to provide Internet service to you, including to maintain and support our network. Internet Usage Data includes Domain Name System (“DNS”) data, which enables users to connect to the Internet by mapping domain names (e.g., www.althea.net) to numerical Internet Protocol (“IP”) addresses, which enables your device to connect to the server hosting the website you wish to visit. Althea does not act as DNS resolver, but rather sends DNS data to reputable public DNS servers so that they can route Internet traffic, including: (1) Cloudflare, Inc., (2) Google LLC, (3) Hurricane Electric, and (4) Lumen Technologies, Inc. In such cases, the privacy policies of the providers of such DNS servers apply, so we encourage you to read those policies to understand their privacy practices. Althea generally does not retain Internet Usage Data, but in some cases we may choose to collect and retain it for longer where necessary to comply with applicable laws; to respond to valid legal process (such as a court order); or to detect threats, perform debugging, investigate and/or protect the functioning, integrity, security, or safety of our systems or the Althea network.

Where a third-party ISP, not Althea, controls an exit node, Althea acts as a service provider to those ISPs. In such cases, our data privacy practices are the same as outlined above and in our Privacy Policy. However, in such cases, the third-party ISP’s privacy policy applies to their processing activities, so we encourage you to read those policies to understand their privacy practices. Althea’s Privacy Policy only applies to the data it collects as a service provider for such third-party ISPs.

We encourage you to read our Privacy Policy in full to understand our privacy practices.