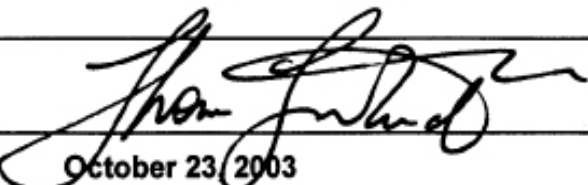


Subject:	Routine Access to Department of Health and Office of Health Promotion Records
Branch:	Information Management Branch
Approved by:	
Effective Date:	October 23, 2003

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate access to information by providing persons with an opportunity to obtain certain categories of records without a formal application under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FOIPOP Act"). It shall be administered in accordance with the following principles:

a) Personal Privacy

The policy shall be applied in a manner such that the personal privacy of individuals will be protected. Records containing the personal information of third parties, as defined in the *FOIPOP Act*, will not be disclosed by the Department of Health or the Office of Health Promotion outside the *FOIPOP Act*, unless the personal information has been severed or with the written consent of the individual the information is about.

b) Timeliness

The Department of Health and the Office of Health Promotion will respond to any routine access requests in a reasonable and timely fashion.

c) Cost Recovery

Fees for the reproduction and other provision of records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations or statutes.

d) Transparency

This policy shall be made available to the public.

e) Reasonableness

This policy shall apply only to requests for reasonable quantities of records.

2. DEFINITIONS

Routine Access is the routine or automatic release, in full or in part, of certain types of administrative or operational records as a matter of course in response to a request without the need for a formal application for records under the *FOIPOP Act*.

Active Dissemination is the periodic and proactive release of information or records in the absence of a request using mechanisms such as the Internet, libraries, etc. .

FOIPOP Access is the release of a record in response to a formal application made under the *FOIPOP Act*.

A Record includes books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records.

Personal Information means recorded information about an identifiable individual including the individual's name, address or telephone number; race, national or ethnic origin, colour or religious or political beliefs or associations; age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or family status; an identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual; fingerprints, blood type or inheritable characteristics; the individual's health-care history, including a physical or mental disability; educational, financial, criminal or employment history; anyone else's opinions about the individual and the individual's personal views or opinions, except if they are about someone else.

Administrator means the Administrator, Access & Privacy, at the Department of Health.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy is to provide routine access to certain Department of Health and Office of Health Promotion records. This policy provides a proactive approach to information access, and reflects the spirit of openness and accountability of the *FOIPOP Act*.

4. APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- all staff, programs and services of the Department of Health and the Office of Health Promotion.
- requests for less than 50 pages of records in a particular category and/or time period. Repetitive requests by a person for significant volumes of records, or the separation of a request into several small requests totaling a large volume, will be considered at the discretion of the Administrator. It is important to ensure that the application of the Routine Access Policy not unduly interfere with the day-to-day operations of the Department of Health and the Office of Health Promotion.
- all records created from October 23, 2003 forward and designated under this policy in accordance with Appendix A or Appendix B.

This policy does not apply to records subject to exemptions under the *FOIPOP Act*. Personal information shall be severed with the same criteria and in the same manner as requests made under the *FOIPOP Act*.

5. POLICY DIRECTIVES

Departmental staff will be provided with a print version of the policy. The policy will be posted on the Department of Health's and the Office of Health Promotion's websites.

Department of Health and Office of Health Promotion staff shall forward requests for routine access to records to the Administrator for response.

A tracking system will be developed for compliance and auditing purposes.

6. POLICY GUIDELINES

When Department of Health and Office of Health Promotion staff receive a request for a particular record, or set of records, staff shall forward the request to the Administrator.

The Administrator shall review the request and determine if the records fall within the list of records approved for routine access under Appendix A or Appendix B.

If the records requested are included in Appendix A or Appendix B, the Administrator shall provide them to the applicant within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 30 days from the receipt of the request.

If the records requested are not included in Appendix A or Appendix B, the Administrator shall provide the applicant with information on other avenues that may be available to obtain the information (e.g. submitting a formal *FOIPOP* application, applying to another department or through active dissemination).

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Deputy Minister of Health and his or her designate, the Administrator, shall be accountable for the implementation of this policy.

8. COMPLIANCE

The Deputy Minister of Health and his or her designate, the Administrator, shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy. The Administrator is responsible for tracking compliance with the policy.

This policy is subject to audit by the Nova Scotia Government Internal Audit Unit, Department of Finance.

9. EVALUATION

The Administrator shall evaluate this policy on an annual basis.

10. REFERENCES

- Sections 2 and 27 of the *FOIPOP Act*
- Department of Health and Office of Health Promotion *Information Management: Access & Privacy Policy*

11. INQUIRIES

For any inquiries on this policy, please contact:

Nova Scotia Department of Health
Information Access & Privacy Unit
1690 Hollis Street
Halifax, NS B3J 2R8
Tel: (902) 424-5336
Fax: (902) 424-0763

The Department of Health website may be found at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/health/>.

12. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Records available for routine access from the Department of Health

Appendix B - Records available for routine access from the Office of Health Promotion

APPENDIX A

Department of Health records available under the Routine Access Policy

Description	Program/Branch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Business Plans/Budgets - District Health Authorities • Federal/Provincial Medical Equipment Funding (breakdown by district) • Final Audit Reports • Expenses incurred in specific events (e.g. Minister/Deputy Minister meetings) • Summary of yearly expenses Minister, Deputy Minister or any other member of Executive/Senior Leadership Team • Cost of renovations for specific offices carried out within previous six months • Expenditure reports, by category (e.g. salaries, travel, overtime, etc.) for a maximum of three (3) per fiscal year 	Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal service contracts of individuals not appointed pursuant to the <i>Civil Service Act</i> (excluding confidential personal information, and service or product trade secrets) • Secondment agreements both within and outside government (excluding confidential personal information) • Organizational charts (without names and subject to security issues) • Generic job descriptions and pay scale 	Human Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing Homes Licensing Letters • Home Support Agencies Service Compliance Audit 	Continuing Care
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts for goods and services excluding personal information and/or service or product trade secrets • Terms of Reference of projects and/or initiatives • Membership of committees or teams leading projects and/or initiatives (e.g. NS Formulary Management Committee members, Atlantic Drug Formulary Committee, etc.) 	Various

Note: Documents may be added to this list after review.

APPENDIX B

Office of Health Promotion records available under the Routine Access Policy

Description	Program/Branch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Audit Reports • Expenses incurred in specific events (e.g. Minister/Deputy Minister meetings) • Summary of yearly expenses Minister, Deputy Minister or any other member of Management Team • Cost of renovations for specific offices carried out within previous six months • Expenditure reports, by category (e.g. salaries, travel, overtime, etc.) for a maximum of three (3) per fiscal year 	Finance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal service contracts of individuals not appointed pursuant to the <i>Civil Service Act</i> (excluding confidential personal information, and service or product trade secrets) • Secondment agreements both within and outside government (excluding confidential personal information) • Organizational charts (without names and subject to security issues) • Generic job descriptions and pay scale 	Human Resources
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts for goods and services excluding personal information and/or service or product trade secrets • Terms of Reference of projects and/or initiatives • Membership of committees or teams leading projects and/or initiatives 	Various

Note: Documents may be added to this list after review.