

A COMMITMENT TO PRIVACY

The Ontario Public Service is committed to respecting privacy and protecting personal information.

This Fact Sheet provides an overview of best practices for managing personal information. The legal requirements respecting the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal information are found in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*. You should contact your area FIPPA Coordinator if you have questions.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Definition

Personal information means recorded information about an identifiable individual.

Basic Principles

OPS Staff has a responsibility when working with personal information to collect, use and disclose it only where necessary to perform job duties, and to maintain personal information in a secure manner.

BEST PRACTICES

The OPS must adhere to the following best practices for personal information.

Collection

Collect only personal information you need to perform your assigned duties and responsibilities.

Use

Personal information must be used only for the purpose(s) for which it was collected.

Disclosure

Disclose personal information:

- only when the disclosure is consistent with the purpose(s) for which it was collected
- to others only on a “need to know” basis where they require the information to perform their assigned duties and responsibilities
- to a contractor only when a contract is in place requiring the contractor to meet personal information-handling and security standards.

NOTE: It is important to consider what a reasonable person's expectations would be respecting use and disclosure of his/her personal information

Security

Personal information must be kept secure at all times.

When not in use, personal information (both hard copy and electronic) must be maintained under “lock and key”. Hard copy personal information must be stored in lockable file cabinets (i.e. even in secure areas) and all electronic information must be password-protected.

All employees must maintain a clean desk policy.

Privacy Breach

A privacy breach occurs when personal information is inappropriately disclosed (for example, a letter containing an individual's personal information is sent in error to another individual).

A privacy breach must be brought to the attention of your manager immediately.

Retention and Destruction

Personal information must be retained and destroyed in accordance with records retention schedules established by the Archives of Ontario. Personal information that is no longer required must be shredded or erased in a secure manner.



Questions about *Best Practices for Managing Personal Information*?

www.accessandprivacy.gov.on.ca

If you have questions about the collection, use and *especially the disclosure* of personal information in carrying out your job duties, consult with your manager prior to making any decisions.