

Protection of Privacy

What to Do if your Personal Information is Breached

Know the law

The [Access to Information and Protection of Privacy \(ATIPP\) Act](#) regulates how public bodies (government departments, crown corporations and agencies, health care bodies, educational bodies and municipalities) can collect, use and disclose your personal information (e.g. your name, address, social insurance number, MCP number, etc.).

Public bodies must have a purpose to collect, use or disclose your personal information

The ATIPP Act limits how public bodies can collect, use and disclose your personal information (e.g. to provide services to the public such as a rebate program). Even when they have authority to collect, use and disclose your personal information, they must limit it to the minimum amount necessary for that purpose.

What is a privacy breach?

A privacy breach occurs when your personal information is not handled appropriately by a public body. For example, if a letter containing your personal information is mailed to someone else by mistake, or an employee accesses public body records for reasons unrelated to work (e.g. is curious about their neighbour's finances), it is a privacy breach.

Who to contact

Contact the public body you believe has breached your personal information. For a complete listing of ATIPP Coordinators (employees who handle privacy issues for public bodies) go to <http://www.atipp.gov.nl.ca/info/coordinators.html>.

Contact the ATIPP Office for assistance (729-7072 or ATIPPOffice@gov.nl.ca).

If you are not satisfied with how the public body has responded to your inquiry about a potential breach of your personal information you can contact the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (<http://www.oipc.nl.ca>).

What if I receive someone else's personal information?

Immediately contact the public body that sent you the personal information and they will work with you to ensure its secure return or disposal. If you received paper records, the public body will arrange for their return. If you received records electronically (e.g. by email), you will need to delete the information. The public body will confirm with you that the personal information has been returned, deleted or destroyed.

Tips for protecting personal information

To protect your information:

- Frequently check privacy settings on any social media accounts and limit the personal information you share;
- Use strong passwords on all electronic devices or electronic accounts you have;
- Do not click on links or attachments from unknown sources;
- Before disclosing your personal information, ask why the person/organization needs it; and,
- If your sensitive financial information has been breached, consider contacting your bank or credit monitoring service to let them know.

For more information about privacy and the ATIPP Act please visit our website at: <http://www.ope.gov.nl.ca>.