



Privacy Fact Sheet

Disclosing Personal Information to Law Enforcement Agencies and Government Bodies

Introduction

1. The purpose of this Privacy Fact Sheet is to explain the rules governing the disclosure of personal information to law enforcement agencies and government bodies.
2. This Privacy Fact Sheet is intended to assist UBC staff and faculty members to understand their obligations under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). It is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice. If you have questions about FIPPA, contact the Office of the University Counsel.

Requests from Canadian Law Enforcement Agencies

3. Here are examples of Canadian law enforcement agencies:

Jurisdiction of Agency	Examples
Federal	RCMP, Canadian Security Intelligence Service
Provincial	BC Sheriff Services, Ontario Provincial Police
Local	Vancouver Police Department

4. Under FIPPA, UBC is authorized to disclose personal information to Canadian law enforcement agencies to assist in a law enforcement investigation.¹
5. Non-emergency requests from Canadian law enforcement agencies for personal information must be referred to Campus Security, which will respond to the requests in consultation with Legal Counsel in the Office of the University Counsel.
6. In emergency situations where there is not enough time to refer the matter to Campus Security, you may disclose personal information directly to law enforcement agencies if this is necessary to avert a risk of significant harm to health or safety. For guidance, refer to the Privacy Fact Sheet "[Disclosing Personal Information for Health or Safety Reasons](#)".

¹ Section 33(3)(d) of FIPPA

Requests from Canadian Government Bodies

7. Canadian government bodies other than law enforcement agencies may also request information from UBC. Here are examples of these bodies:

Jurisdiction of Body	Examples
Federal	Canada Revenue Agency, Canadian Border Services Agency
Provincial	Ministry of Finance, WorkSafeBC
Local	City of Vancouver, Greater Vancouver Regional District

8. Under FIPPA, UBC faculty and staff members may disclose personal information to Canadian government bodies in accordance with an enactment (law) of British Columbia or Canada that authorizes or requires its disclosure.² The government body must make the request in writing and must specify:

- a. the reason for the request; and
- b. the section of the enactment that authorizes or requires the disclosure.

Example of Legal Authority:

Under section 179 of the *Workers Compensation Act*, an officer of WorkSafeBC is authorized to inspect records that may be relevant to a health or safety investigation.

9. If there is no enactment that authorizes or requires disclosure of the requested information to the Canadian government body, that body will need to provide the individual’s signed consent to disclose his or her information. This consent must specify:

- a. what information may be disclosed; and
- b. the purpose of the disclosure of the information.

10. Requests from Canadian government bodies that do not meet the above criteria must be referred to Legal Counsel in the Office of the University Counsel.

Requests from Foreign Government Bodies

11. Requests from foreign courts, agencies of foreign states or other authorities outside Canada must be accompanied by the individual’s signed authorization to disclose his or her information.

12. Requests that are not accompanied by an authorization must be referred to Legal Counsel in the Office of the University Counsel.

Example of Foreign Request:

The U.S. consulate sometimes requests personal information about American students attending UBC. When these requests are accompanied by a signed authorization, it is not necessary to refer them to Legal Counsel.

² Section 33(2)(e) of FIPPA