

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PRIVACY IN WORKPLACES (BRITISH COLUMBIA): OVERVIEW (PRIVATE SECTOR)

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### What is Access to Information and Privacy?

Your employer must protect your privacy when they have personal information about you, and you also have the right to access this information. This guide is for **private sector workers** (this includes most workers in British Columbia). Public employers such as provincial government agencies, municipalities, health authorities, and police forces are covered in ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PRIVACY IN THE WORKPLACE (BRITISH COLUMBIA): PROCESS GUIDE (PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYER).

If you have a **federally-regulated employer** (like a bank or an airline), this guide does not apply (see <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/workplace/federally-regulated-industries.html>).

### How do I get access to personal information held by my employer?

You have the right to access personal information that your employer holds. This includes documents, photos, images, reports, medical information, or disciplinary records about you. You should ask in writing for this information, and you can refer to British Columbia's [Personal Information Protection Act](#)". You can also use this form: [https://www.oipc.bc.ca/media/11769/form\\_access-request-private-organization.pdf](https://www.oipc.bc.ca/media/11769/form_access-request-private-organization.pdf).

### What if the employer does not give me access to my information, or if they are not protecting my privacy?

If the employer does not respond to your request within 30 days, or is not protecting your privacy (for example, the employer is sharing information about you with other workers), you should first make a **complaint to the employer** using this form: <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/media/15566/howtofilecomplaintorganization.pdf>.

If this does not resolve the issue, you can ask British Columbia's Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) for a **review** using this form: [https://www.oipc.bc.ca/media/11781/form\\_piparequestreviewcomplaint.pdf](https://www.oipc.bc.ca/media/11781/form_piparequestreviewcomplaint.pdf).

If this process is not successful, you can start an **inquiry** with the OIPC, and they can make orders like ordering your employer to give you the information. More information on OIPC inquiries can be found here: <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/guidance-documents/1600>.

If you are having problems with access to information or privacy at work, you should also get legal advice (see below).

### Further information and free legal advice

Detailed process guides on information and privacy rights and other topics are available at: [Stand Informed Resources](#).

**You can get free legal advice at:**

**Access Pro Bono:** This program provides free summary advice from a lawyer, as well as several other legal assistance programs. Call: 604-878-7400 or 1-877-762-6664; Email: [appointments@accessprobono.ca](mailto:appointments@accessprobono.ca); Website: <https://accessprobono.ca>.

**Law Students' Legal Advice Program (LSLAP):** This program provides free legal advice and representation (by supervised law students) in the Lower Mainland. Call: 604-822-5791; Website: <https://www.lslap.bc.ca>

You can also **find advocates** across BC by using PovNet's "Find an Advocate" Tool, available online: <https://www.povnet.org/find-an-advocate>.