

TIPS FOR REQUESTING RECORDS

In BC, two laws set out what kinds of records you can access:

The Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) gives you the right to request access to your own personal information in the custody or control of a private sector "organization," including corporations, non-profit societies and professional associations. Private organizations do not have to provide you with their operational, financial, or other company records.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) gives you the right to request access to records held by "public bodies" including provincial government ministries, local governments, municipal police forces and crown corporations. You can request records that contain your own personal information, and records such as reports, audits, and financial information of the public body.

1. Make your request in writing

If you want to request records from a public body or private organization in BC, the first step is to make your request in writing. Be as specific as possible. Deliver your request to the public body or organization and keep a copy for your records.

2. Keep timelines in mind

Note the date the public body or organization received your request. They have 30 business days to respond, but in some cases they may be able to take a time extension.

If you do not receive a response within 30 business days or the extended time period, you can contact our office and [request a review](#) of a public body or organization's failure to respond to your request.

3. Filing a complaint with OIPC

If you disagree with a time extension taken by a public body or organization in relation to your request for records, believe that a fee assessment for processing your request is inappropriate, or believe that the public body or organization did not complete an adequate search for records in response to your request and you are unable to resolve the matter with them, you may [complain to our office](#). This is different than requesting a review.

4. Not satisfied with response?

If you receive a response within 30 days or the extended time period but you do not feel the public body or organization has responded appropriately, you have two options:

If you feel records are missing, you must first complain directly to the public body or organization and provide reasons why you believe there are additional records. If they are unable to resolve your complaint, you may then complain to our office.

If you disagree with how the public body or organization has severed the records they provided to you, you may request a review by our office.

oipc

OFFICE OF THE
INFORMATION &
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA