

About generative AI tools

Generative Artificial Intelligence¹ (Gen AI) is becoming ever more widely used to help with everyday tasks. You might use Gen AI to help understand an email from a public body or organization, or to help write a response. Or you might use Gen AI to help you make a submission to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC (OIPC).

Examples of commonly used Gen AI tools are:

- OpenAI's ChatGPT
- Google's Gemini
- Microsoft 365's Copilot
- Anthropic's Claude
- Meta's Meta AI

While Gen AI tools can help you generate access requests or privacy reviews or complaints, the OIPC cautions that:

- The information a Gen AI tool gives you may not always be correct. It might be wrong about the law that applies to your matter, or it might suggest a process or action, or cite a law or decision, that does not exist.
- Gen AI tools may give you responses that lack detail or context, or alternatively, add unnecessary layers of complexity to your matter. This makes it more difficult for public bodies, organizations, or the OIPC to understand the matter you wish to raise. You may have to explain yourself more than once, and it may take longer for the public body, organization, or the OIPC to process your matter.
- Any information you type into or share with a Gen AI tool may be used or shared with others. The information may be shared by the company that owns the Gen AI tool, without your knowledge.

Once you enter information into a Gen AI tool, you may not be able to get it back or have it deleted.

Tips for using Gen AI tools

Validate and verify!

- Confirm the information you get from a Gen AI tool is correct before using it. For example, if a Gen AI tool gives you information about a public body's complaint handling process, you should check it is the same as the information on the public body's website;

¹ According to the OECD, Generative AI is a category of a AI that can create new content such as text, images, videos and music. It gained global attention in 2022 with text-to-image generators and large language models (LLMs).

inaccurate information may cause a delay to the processing of your complaint. If the Gen AI tool cites legislation, look at the legislation itself to make sure that it is correct.

- Verify that any submissions to the OIPC you create with Gen AI adhere to the submission criteria in our guidance before submitting: [Guide to OIPC Processes \(FIPPA\)](#), [Guide to OIPC Processes \(PIPA\)](#). You are responsible for making sure that your submission is accurate and adheres to these criteria.

Be the human in the loop!

- Use the response the Gen AI tool gives you as a guide to follow when contacting public bodies, organizations, or the OIPC. Add your own words and reasons, or summarize the information where you can, to make sure what you give to the public body, organization or the OIPC is true and accurately captures your concerns.

Consider how much to share!

- Be careful about sharing any confidential information or personal information, about you or someone else, with a Gen AI tool. The information may be stored by the company that owns the tool, and they may use or share the information somewhere without your knowledge for purposes you might not expect and/or cannot control. Personal information includes not just direct identifiers, like your name and address, but information that could be combined with other information to identify someone.
- When possible, change the settings in the Gen AI tool to opt-out of sharing chat history. This may limit your conversations and information being saved and used or shared by the company that owns the Gen AI tool.

Don't fall for flattery!

- Some Gen AI tools use flattery or excessively affirming language towards users—a tendency referred to as AI sycophancy². For example, the tool may tell you that you have the perfect argument or grounds for a complaint. Be aware of this tendency while you review information you receive from Gen AI tools.

We can help, too!

- We are also here to help you navigate the complaint process. Call us at (250) 387-5629 (Victoria), (604) 660-2421 (Vancouver) or (800) 663-7867, or email info@oipc.bc.ca.

Note: this content is adapted from "Before you rely on AI: what to know" by @Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner, used under CC BY 4.0.

These guidelines are for information purposes only and do not constitute a decision or finding by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia. These guidelines do not affect the powers, duties, or functions of the Information and Privacy Commissioner regarding any complaint, investigation, or other matter under FIPPA or PIPA.

² <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.aec8352>