



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE RELEASES "PRIVACY GUIDELINES FOR LANDLORDS AND TENANTS"

VICTORIA - Information and Privacy Commissioner Elizabeth Denham today announces that a document entitled "Privacy Guidelines for Landlords and Tenants" has been posted on the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia's website (the "Guidelines").

The office has received numerous inquiries from both landlords and tenants asking about privacy related issues since the *Personal Information Protection Act* ("PIPA") was proclaimed on January 1, 2004. The office has also investigated a number of complaints by tenants or prospective tenants concerning their privacy rights under PIPA.

Commissioner Denham stated "We hope these Guidelines will assist landlords and property managers in discharging their duties under the *Residential Tenancy Act* in a manner that respects the privacy of tenants and promotes transparency in landlord and tenant relationships". The Guidelines will inform tenants about their privacy rights pursuant to PIPA in relation to their dealings with landlords.

The Guidelines cover a broad spectrum of frequently asked questions, including for example, what information can a landlord collect from an prospective tenant on the initial application form; and ongoing privacy issues that may develop during the course of a tenancy agreement, such as the use of video surveillance in an apartment building.

Commissioner Denham hopes that the Guidelines will educate landlords of their obligation to collect, use, disclose and securely store the personal information of their tenants in a privacy sensitive manner that is compliant with PIPA.

The full text of the Guidelines can be found at www.oipc.bc.ca.

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