

**For Immediate Release
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**BC public bodies need to act to categorize and communicate proactively
disclosed records**

VICTORIA—Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael McEvoy has found that many public bodies must act to categorize and communicate to the public the kinds of records they will proactively disclose.

The report found that while some public bodies comply with their obligations under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA), many need to do more to meet their legal obligation. The findings were published in Investigation Report 20-01: *Section 71: Categories of records available without a request*.

“Proactive disclosure is more than just a helpful suggestion or best practice – it is a legal obligation under FIPPA. Public bodies can help themselves and the public by proactively disclosing frequently requested records,” said Commissioner McEvoy.

The report investigated how thirty BC public bodies categorize records available without an access to information request under s. 71 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). This requirement is consistent with FIPPA’s overall objective of accountability and transparency. Categories of records should be specific, scheduled, and publicly available.

The Commissioner cited COVID-19 as an example where public bodies might create categories of records related to financial expenses specifically related to the pandemic.

This report follows several other proactive disclosure reports from the OIPC that explain the necessity and means for public bodies to be open and transparent.

The report has three recommendations for all public bodies in British Columbia:

- All public bodies should establish additional categories of records;
- Categories of records should be published and easily accessible to everyone;
and
- Government should update its Open Information and Open Data Policy to include guidance and tools to help ministries identify and establish categories of records for routine release.

The OIPC will proactively disclose additional datasets as part of the recommendations including Monthly Travel Expenses - Deputies and COVID-19 related expenditures. The datasets can be found on the [Proactive Disclosure](#) section of the OIPC website.

Investigation Report 20-01: *Section 71: Categories of records available without a request* is available for download at <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/reports/investigation-reports/>.

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