

For immediate release

May 3, 2021

Information and Privacy Commissioner McEvoy says now is the time to ‘Make privacy a priority’

VICTORIA – Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia, Michael McEvoy, issued the following statement to mark the start of Privacy Awareness Week (May 3-7).

“This year’s Privacy Awareness Week theme, ‘Make privacy a priority’ conveys a sense of urgency that is appropriate given the world we find ourselves in more than one year into the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Remote workspaces, video conferencing, virtual doctor’s appointments –we’re benefiting tremendously from technology that helps us stay safe and connected during the pandemic. This rapid adaptation and massive shift online, however, comes with very pressing privacy concerns. What types of information are these service providers collecting from us? How are they using it? And on the provider side, what are our legal obligations when we ask British Columbians to entrust us with their often sensitive personal information.

“Making privacy a priority means giving these important questions the urgency they deserve and taking the steps necessary to address them. Our website includes a host of practical, accessible resources to help, including our PrivacyRight educational program, which takes you step by step through building a comprehensive management program, our security self-assessment tool, guidance on conducting privacy impact assessments *before* you launch a program, and many other resources.

“I encourage anyone collecting, using or disclosing people’s personal information to access these resources and take the steps to make privacy a priority today, and every day.”

Commissioner Speaker Series – inaugural event

When: Tomorrow (Tuesday, May 4) 2pm – 3pm PDT:

What: Privacy in the age of COVID-19: PAW panel discussion to launch Commissioner Speaker Series

What does privacy mean in an age at a time when we’ve rapidly had to adapt to living more of our lives online than ever before? Commissioner McEvoy will moderate what is sure to be an illuminating discussion on some of the most pressing privacy related questions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who: On the panel with the Commissioner will be John Edwards, Privacy Commissioner of New Zealand; Jennifer Stoddart, Former Privacy Commissioner of Canada; and David Loukidelis, Former Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia.

Where: Visit oipc.bc.ca for further details

Better Business Bureau of Mainland BC: Privacy Awareness Week

When: Friday, May 7, 12pm

What: Commissioner McEvoy to join live Facebook discussion with Better Business Bureau of Mainland BC

As part of the BBB's Live Chat Series, Commissioner McEvoy will participate in a live chat to discuss the importance of protecting privacy, as well as the rights and responsibilities of businesses and customers.

We'll also be sharing a host of educational resources and guidance throughout the week on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

***More on Privacy Awareness Week:** Privacy Awareness Week is a global effort coordinated by members of the Asia Pacific Privacy Authorities (APPA) to promote awareness of privacy issues and the importance of protecting personal information. For more, visit: <https://www.appaforum.org/paw/>*

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