

**For immediate release
January 28, 2022**

Take five for data privacy: Commissioner statement on Data Privacy Day

VICTORIA— BC Information and Privacy Commissioner Michael McEvoy released the following statement in recognition of Data Privacy Day, January 28, 2022:

“Over the course of the global COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen not only a proliferation of new digital spaces but also a broad-based acceptance of remote work, virtual health visits, online educational tools, and video conferencing with our friends, family, and business associates.

“There is no doubt that such online resources help us navigate these challenging times. But they rely on data to perform their tasks—your data. On Data Privacy Day, I urge British Columbians to recognize the value of personal information. Take a few minutes today to carefully secure your online interactions and better protect the data of others, if it is in your control.”

Resources:

Commissioner McEvoy offers the following tips to help British Columbians take control of their digital presence:

Social media

- Use a strong, unique password: choose phrases w/ upper & lower case & special characters.
- Don't automatically accept friend requests; verify requests in advance by contacting the person outside of social media to confirm they sent you a request.
- Set a monthly reminder for yourself to check your privacy settings and delete inactive contacts.
- Delete old or duplicate social media accounts you no longer use.

Email account

- Don't click on a link or attachment unless you know who sent it and/or what it is.
- Use a passphrase not a password and set up a monthly reminder to change it.
- Choose an email provider that offers end to end encryption.
- If you lose a device, immediately log into your email account and change your password.
- Set up notifications so that you know if someone logs into your email account from a new device.

Mobile devices

- Password protect all of your devices and be sure to lock your screens.
- Set your device to erase all data after 10 failed attempts.
- Limit geo-location tracking: activate GPS only when needed.

Web browsers

- Use an internet browser and internet search engine that prioritizes privacy.
- Visit secure sites when shopping online: look for an address that starts with *https*: (the S stands for *secure*).

Apps

- Be careful when sharing your personal data.
- Ask yourself: do I really need this app?
- Take a few moments to delete apps you no longer use.
- Install from an official app source and be sure to update apps.
- Disable location, microphone and camera access on your apps.
- Read the app's terms of service and learn what information the app can access on your device (like your contacts) before you download the app.
- Enable password entry into videoconferencing apps.

Guidance documents

[PrivacyRight](#)

PrivacyRight helps small businesses and organizations in BC understand their obligations under the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA). Webinars, videos, and podcast provide educational content in fun and easy to understand formats.

[Privacy guidelines for strata corporations and strata agents](#)

[Privacy tips for seniors: Protect your personal information](#)

[FIPPA and online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[Tips for public bodies and organizations setting up remote workspaces](#)

Find more information on our [website](#) and follow us on Twitter for the latest information and news @BCInfoPrivacy

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