



OFFICE OF THE  
INFORMATION &  
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER  
FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA

Order F26-49

## MINISTRY OF FINANCE

David S. Adams  
Adjudicator

June 16, 2026

CanLII Cite: 2026 BCIPC 61

Quicklaw Cite: [2026] B.C.I.P.C.D. No. 61

**Summary:** An applicant requested communications containing his personal information from the Ministry of Finance (the Ministry), under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). The Ministry disclosed responsive records but withheld information in them under s. 22(1) (unreasonable invasion of third-party privacy) of FIPPA. The adjudicator found that some of the withheld information was personal information but that a small amount of information was contact information rather than personal information. The adjudicator found that disclosure of the personal information would unreasonably invade the privacy of third parties and ordered the Ministry to refuse to disclose it. The adjudicator ordered the Ministry to disclose the information that was not personal information.

**Statutes Considered:** *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, RSBC 1996 c 165, ss. 22(1), 22(2)(a), 22(2)(f), 22(3)(d).

## INTRODUCTION

[1] An applicant requested communications containing his own personal information from the Ministry of Finance (the Ministry), under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA). The Ministry disclosed responsive records but withheld a small amount of information in them under ss. 15(1)(l) (harm to the security of a property or system) and 22(1) (unreasonable invasion of third-party privacy).

[2] The applicant asked the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) to review the Ministry's decision to withhold information. Mediation by the OIPC did not settle the matter and it proceeded to inquiry.

[3] Both parties provided submissions for this inquiry. The parties agreed between themselves that s. 15(1)(l) was no longer at issue in this inquiry, so I have not considered it.

## **ISSUE AND BURDEN OF PROOF**

[4] The sole issue I must decide in this inquiry is whether the Ministry is required to withhold information under s. 22(1) of FIPPA.

[5] Under s. 57(2) of FIPPA, it is up to the applicant to prove that disclosure of the information at issue would not be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy. However, it is up to the Ministry initially to establish that the information at issue is personal information.<sup>1</sup>

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Background**

[6] The applicant has carried on an extensive correspondence with the Ministry and other government parties about various matters. A portion of that correspondence is in the Ministry's custody and forms the set of records that is responsive to the applicant's request.

### **Information at issue**

[7] The Ministry has withheld only a small amount of information from the responsive records. The withheld information consists of third parties' resumes, a third party's email address, and a government employee username known as an IDIR.

### ***Unreasonable invasion of third-party privacy – s. 22(1)***

[8] Section 22(1) provides that a public body must refuse to disclose information whose disclosure would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy. The analytical framework for s. 22(1) is well established and I will apply it here.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Is the information personal information?*

[9] First, I must decide whether the withheld information is "personal information" as that term is defined in Schedule 1 of FIPPA:

---

<sup>1</sup> Order 03-41, 2003 CanLII 49220 at paras 9-11.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Order F15-03, 2015 BCIPC 3 (CanLII) at para 58.

“personal information” means recorded information about an identifiable individual other than contact information;

“contact information” means information to enable an individual at a place of business to be contacted and includes the name, position name or title, business telephone number, business address, business email or business fax number of the individual;

[10] Previous orders have established that information is “personal information” for the purposes of s. 22(1) if it is reasonably capable of identifying a particular individual, either alone or when combined with other available sources of information.<sup>3</sup>

[11] I find that the resumes, the email address, and the IDIR are all reasonably capable of identifying individuals. I find that the information in the resumes and IDIR are not contact information because they are not information to enable an individual at a place of business to be contacted.

[12] The remaining question is whether the email address is contact information. The applicant says it is because the address owner used it to interact with government in a professional or advocacy capacity. The Ministry takes the position that the email address is a personal email address rather than a business email address, and so is not contact information. The Ministry’s manager for freedom of information requests and correspondence (the FOI Manager) says that the email address “appears to be personal in nature rather than business contact information, as it uses a generic ‘@gmail.com’ domain and is not associated with a government or corporate domain”, and that there is nothing to indicate it functioned to enable a person to be contacted at a place of business.<sup>4</sup>

[13] Whether an email address qualifies as contact information depends on whether the owner of the address was using the email address to conduct business or to allow someone to contact them for business purposes.<sup>5</sup>

[14] The Ministry cites several orders for the proposition that “standalone email addresses are neither automatically disclosable under s. 22(4) nor presumptively protected under s. 22(3), requiring a contextual s. 22(2) analysis”, but this proposition, even if true, does not assist in determining whether the email address is contact information. If it is contact information, no analysis under those sections need take place because it is not personal information. I likewise do not think the fact that it is attached to the Gmail domain rather than a

---

<sup>3</sup> Order F18-11, 2018 BCIPC 14 (CanLII) at para 32.

<sup>4</sup> Affidavit of FOI Manager at paras 15-16.

<sup>5</sup> Order F21-35, 2021 BCIPC 43 (CanLII) at para 164; Order F22-13, 2022 BCIPC 15 (CanLII) at paras 65-67.

corporate or government domain has any bearing on whether it is being used to conduct business.

[15] In Order F23-05, the adjudicator found an email address that had been used to communicate with members of a city council in the address owner's capacity as a spokesperson for a society, and that had been included in the address owner's signature block to enable them to be contacted about matters related to the society, to be contact information.<sup>6</sup>

[16] In this case, the context in which the email address appears makes it clear to me that it is being used to conduct business and to allow its owner to be contacted for a business purpose. The email in which the email address appears promotes the work of the two CEOs of a professional organization (one of whom is the author of the email and the owner of the email address) and solicits the collaboration of the BC government with the organization in upcoming government initiatives. These are plainly business purposes, and the communication was clearly undertaken on behalf of the organization.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Ministry itself describes the email address as "a personal/work contact Gmail address".<sup>8</sup>

[17] For these reasons, I find that the email address is contact information. It is therefore not personal information and I will not consider it further under s. 22.

[18] I will go on to consider whether disclosure of the resumes and/or the IDIR would be an unreasonable invasion of third parties' privacy.

*Not an unreasonable invasion of privacy – s. 22(4)*

[19] Section 22(4) sets out circumstances where the disclosure of personal information is not an unreasonable invasion of a third party's personal privacy.

[20] The Ministry says no s. 22(4) circumstance applies to any of the withheld information. The applicant does not address s. 22(4). Reviewing the withheld information in light of the s. 22(4) circumstances, I do not find that any of them apply.

*Presumed unreasonable invasion of privacy – s. 22(3)*

[21] Section 22(3) sets out circumstances in which the disclosure of personal information is presumed to be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's privacy.

---

<sup>6</sup> Order F23-05, 2023 BCIPC 6 (CanLII) at paras 24-28.

<sup>7</sup> See Order F21-03, 2021 BCIPC 3 (CanLII) at paras 16-17, where the adjudicator held that the email address of a person who hoped to do business with the public body was contact information.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry's initial submission at para 13.

The Ministry submits that s. 22(3)(d) applies to all the withheld information. The applicant does not address s. 22(3).

*Third party's employment, occupational, or educational history – s. 22(3)(d)*

[22] Section 22(3)(d) provides that a disclosure of personal information is presumed to be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's privacy where the information relates to the third party's employment, occupational, or educational history.

[23] The Ministry says the resumes relate to third parties' employment, occupational, and educational histories. It says the IDIR relates to a third party's employment history.

[24] Many orders have found s. 22(3)(d) to apply to the information in third parties' resumes because resumes, by their nature, relate directly to the third party's employment, occupational, and educational history.<sup>9</sup> I make a similar finding with respect to the information in the resumes at issue here.

[25] Likewise, many orders have found s. 22(3)(d) to apply to IDIR usernames because the IDIR is a unique combination of letters derived from an employee's name, is assigned to them alone, and is used by them as part of their employment.<sup>10</sup> I find that s. 22(3)(d) applies to the IDIR in this case.

[26] As a result of these findings, disclosure of the resumes and the IDIR is presumed to be an unreasonable invasion of third-party privacy. The parties do not address any other s. 22(3) provisions, and I do not find that any apply.

*Relevant circumstances – s. 22(2)*

[27] Section 22(2) provides that in determining whether a disclosure of personal information would be an unreasonable invasion of third-party privacy, a public body must consider all relevant circumstances, including those set out in s. 22(2). It is at this stage of the analysis that any applicable s. 22(3) presumptions may be rebutted.

*Scrutiny of public body – s. 22(2)(a)*

[28] Section 22(2)(a) asks whether disclosure is desirable for the purpose of subjecting the activities of a public body to public scrutiny.

---

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., Order F25-20, 2025 BCIPC 24 (CanLII) and the orders cited therein.

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., Order F24-93, 2024 BCIPC 106 (CanLII) at para 94 and the orders cited therein.

[29] The applicant says his access request relates to records containing his own personal information and his communications with various government offices. He says that disclosure of the withheld information would ensure transparency about how government officials handled communications with him. The Ministry says disclosure of the information would subject individual third parties, not the Ministry, to scrutiny, which is not the purpose of s. 22(2)(a).

[30] Without disclosing the contents of the withheld personal information, I can say that none of it relates in any way to how government officials handled communications with the applicant (or any other matter). I do not think disclosure of any of the withheld information is desirable for subjecting the Ministry, or any other public body, to scrutiny. I find that s. 22(2)(a) is not a relevant consideration.

Supplied in confidence – s. 22(2)(f)

[31] Section 22(2)(f) asks whether the personal information was supplied in confidence. Previous orders have established that if a third party supplied information in an objectively reasonable expectation of confidentiality, this will weigh against disclosure.<sup>11</sup>

[32] The Ministry suggests that resumes sent to a minister for possible business engagements are supplied in an objectively reasonable expectation of confidentiality. The FOI Manager deposes that in his experience, people who send unsolicited resumes to a minister do so in the expectation that the resume will be disclosed, if at all, only for internal consideration, and not to the world.<sup>12</sup> The applicant does not address the point.

[33] I accept that resumes provided by an individual in support of a job application are typically supplied in confidence.<sup>13</sup> However, the resumes at issue were not supplied in support of a job application, but as part of a business promotion involving a professional organization. There are certainly no express statements of confidentiality associated with them, nor in my view are there circumstances suggesting an implied understanding of confidentiality. Without more, I cannot conclude that they were supplied in an objectively reasonable expectation of confidentiality. I do not find that s. 22(2)(f) applies to them.

Other relevant circumstances

[34] The Ministry says disclosure of the IDIR could facilitate unauthorized access attempts on government systems, phishing, or other “cyber risks”. In support of this position, it provided an affidavit from its acting chief information

<sup>11</sup> Order F23-28, 2023 BCIPC 32 (CanLII) at para 74.

<sup>12</sup> Affidavit of FOI Manager at para 13.

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., Order F23-34, 2023 BCIPC 40 (CanLII) at paras 109-112.

security officer (the IS Officer), who provides extensive evidence of the security risks associated with disclosure.<sup>14</sup> The applicant does not address this point. While I accept the IS Officer's evidence, I do not think it has anything to do with whether disclosure of the IDIR would be an unreasonable invasion of a third party's privacy. Instead, the evidence relates to the harm to the Ministry's systems that might be expected from disclosure.<sup>15</sup> I do not find this to be a relevant consideration under s. 22.

[35] The applicant also says that public bodies sometimes apply s. 22 broadly out of caution. Perhaps that is true (though one might expect, and hope, that a public body would exercise caution in dealing with the personal information of third parties), but in this case, the Ministry's severing is narrow and precisely targeted. In addition, the applicant himself says the remaining redactions are narrow and "minimal relative to the overall record package". I do not find this to be a relevant consideration.

#### *Conclusion on s. 22(1)*

[36] I have found that the resumes and the IDIR username are personal information, but that the email address is contact information. I have not found that any s. 22(4) circumstances apply to any of the personal information. I found that s. 22(3)(d) applies to all of the personal information. Considering the relevant circumstances under s. 22(2), I have not found that any apply, either for or against disclosure. The presumption of an unreasonable invasion of privacy with respect to the resumes and the IDIR username has not been rebutted. As a result, the applicant has not met his burden of proving that disclosure of the personal information would not be an unreasonable invasion of third-party privacy. The Ministry must refuse to disclose the personal information, but must disclose the contact information.

## **CONCLUSION**

[37] For the reasons given above, I make the following order under s. 58 of FIPPA:

1. Subject to item 2 below, I confirm the Ministry's decision to withhold information under s. 22(1).
2. The Ministry is not required to refuse to disclose the information it withheld on page 20 of its records package. It must disclose that information to the applicant.

---

<sup>14</sup> Affidavit of IS Officer at paras 6-37.

<sup>15</sup> The affidavit itself provides, at para 5, that its purpose is "to support the application of section 15" of FIPPA to IDIR usernames.

- 
3. The Ministry must provide the OIPC's registrar of inquiries with a copy of its cover letter and the records it provides to the applicant in compliance with item 2 above.

[38] Pursuant to s. 59(1) of FIPPA, the public body is required to comply with this order by July 29, 2026.

June 16, 2026

**ORIGINAL SIGNED BY**

---

David S. Adams, Adjudicator

OIPC File No.: F24-98483