# File: 292-40/[REQUESTNUMBER]

[TODAYDATE]

Sent via email: [RQREMAIL]

[ADDRESS]

Dear [RFNAME] [RLNAME]:

**Re: Request for Access to Records**

***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA)**

Information Access Operations processes freedom of information requests for the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The Ministry received your request for access to personal information on [RECEIVEDDATE]. As per our conversation on Date we We understand your Choose to be for: *[REQUESTDESCRIPTION]*. We are proceeding with your request for access to your own information, and you may find that your own records contain most of the information you are seeking.

In your previous request, you received your personal information from Date to Date. As a result, the date range for this request will be Date to Date.

Thank you for providing the requested documents received by our office on Date.

You have also requested personal information about other people. Depending on the ages and capability of these people, we require various documents. Please complete the enclosed clarification checklist regarding accessing the records of others and return to our office as soon as possible. Please note: if you are requesting access to the information of another person over the age of 12, you should not witness their signature; *please ensure the Authorization is witnessed by a non-related adult and someone other than yourself.* The Authorization is to be completed by the individual consenting to the disclosure of their records. If we receive the completed documents by the date below, we will review them and determine as to whether you qualify to receive the children's records. We would appreciate you sending the documents electronically (email or fax).

We will not begin processing your request for access to the personal information of your Choose, until you provide the appropriate documentation requested on the enclosed checklist**. If we have not received the required documents by** October 27, 2011Date **we will continue to process this request for your own information only. Documents received in our office late or incomplete will not be considered for this request.**

**With respect to your own information:** FOIPPA allows 30 business days for public bodies to respond unless the nature of the request requires an extension per section 10 of FOIPPA. We will make every effort to respond to your request by **[DUEDATE]**. We will notify you as soon as possible if there is a need to extend the time limit for responding to your request.

Please be advised that all correspondence will be sent to the address you provided. Should your address change or you determine that you no longer require the requested records, please advise our office immediately.

**Option 1: Identity verified**

Records located in response to your request(s) will be delivered through the BC Secure File Transfer Service (SFTS) (subject to limited exemptions). This service provides a quick, easy and secure way of delivering and accessing records. A guide for using the SFTS is enclosed for your convenience.

**Option 2: Identity not verified**

Information Access Operations (IAO) is now able to deliver the response to your FOI request using your email address. IAO is using a Secure File Transfer Site to allow us to deliver FOI response packages to applicants in the most secure and efficient way possible. In the past, you may have been required to travel to a government office to verify your identification and pick up your package but this is no longer necessary, as our new service will allow you to verify your identity online.

You are able to use this service if you have a Photo BC Services Card or a BC Driver’s Licence and Services Card (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/government-id/bc-services-card/types-of-cards>) **and** an email address.

If you wish to verify your identity for your existing FOI request, please submit the required information through our online personal FOI request form (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/open-government/open-information/freedom-of-information/personal-information-request>). If you experience difficulties accessing the link try a different browser such as Chrome, Firefox or Safari (on Apple product). Follow these instructions:

* Choose to submit a new personal request
* Choose login with BC Services Card
* In the description of records box, enter the following: **"ID verification for FOI Request [[REQUESTNUMBER]]"**
  + By entering your existing FOI request number (see email subject line), we will be able to link the verification to your existing request

Once you have completed this process **and** a response to your FOI request is complete, you will receive an email with instructions and a link to download your records. A guide for using the SFTS is enclosed for your convenience.

For all future personal FOI requests, we recommend using our online form and the BC Services Card identity verification process.

You submitted your request outside of our online process. For future reference, you can submit both personal and general requests at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/open-government/open-information/freedom-of-information>. Using the online process is a fast, easy and secure way to submit your Freedom of Information (FOI) request. It also ensures that we receive the information required to open your request. The webpage also includes frequently asked questions, additional information regarding the FOI process, and links to previously completed FOI requests and proactively released government records.

**District Office Delivery:**

If your records are not sent to you via SFTS, they will be sent to the Ministry District Office nearest to your address. When your records are ready to be released, Information Access Operations (IAO) will contact you in writing with details regarding the location and contact information of the Ministry District Office where you may pickup your records. Please be prepared to produce two pieces of identification when picking up your records.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Primary ID** | **Secondary ID** |
|  |  |
| * Provincial Identification | * Birth Certificate |
| * Passport | * Provincial Health Card |
| * Original Citizenship Papers | * Citizenship Papers |
| * Immigration Documents | * Credit Card |
| * Valid Driver's License * Secure Certificate of Indian Status card, issued by the Government of Canada |  |
|  |  |

If you have any questions regarding your request, please contact [PRIMARYUSERNAME], the analyst assigned to your request, at [PRIMARYUSERPHONE]. This number can also be reached toll-free anywhere in Canada at 1-833 283-8200. Please provide the FOI request number, found at the top right of the first page of this letter, in any communications.

Sincerely,

[PRIMARYUSERNAME], [PRIMARYUSERTITLE]

Information Access Operations

Enclosures

FAQ Informed Consent – Accessing the Records of a Person Age 12 Years and Older

FAQ Accessing the Records of Children and Incapable Adults

**BC Government Secure File Transfer Service**

Information Access Operations Ad-Hoc User Guide

**Returning Users**

If you are a returning user, please use your existing username and password. Passwords expire after 90 days. You can update your password at anytime.

**New Users**

Your records are provided to you via the Secure File Transfer Service (SFTS). You will need to setup a User Account to access to the STFS site.

You must log in to your temporary SFTS account within 7 days. After 7 days, your temporary SFTS account will expire and will no longer be accessible. If you are no longer able to access your account or records, please contact the FOI Analyst identified in your Response Letter for assistance.

**Email Communication**

1. The first email has your Response Letter attached.
   1. This email is from the FOI Analyst at Information Access Operations who processed your file.
   2. If your records are password protected, the response letter will contain your **password to open your records.**

1. The second email is the *New Package is Waiting* notification email.
   1. This email will be received at the same time as the third email.
   2. A hyperlink to the SFTS is contained in this email.

1. The third email is the *New User Account for the BC Secure File Transfer Service*
   1. This email is sent only to users who are required to setup a STFS User Account.
   2. If you are an existing user and your account is still active, you will not receive this email.
   3. This email contains the following:
      1. a **Hyperlink** to the SFTS site
      2. a **Username** to access the SFTS site
      3. a **temporary Password** to access the SFTS site
   4. If you are unable to locate this email, please check your junk/spam folder. It is from BC Secure File Transfer Notification Service <DONOTREPLY>@gov.bc.ca.

**Accessing Your Records**

1. Setup your SFTS account.
   1. Click on the URL hyperlink provided in your third email.
   2. You will be redirected to the SFTS site.
   3. If you are not redirected to SFTS site, it is accessible at: filetransfer.gov.bc.ca.
2. Enter your *Username* and *Password*.
   1. These are provided in your third email.
3. Change your SFTS account password.
   1. You will be required to do this as soon as you login.
   2. Follow the instructions provided to you after you login to SFTS for the first time.
   3. After you change your password, select "Finish." This will redirect you to your STFS Inbox.
4. Your records are now accessible.
   1. Records will be available in SFTS for 35 days.
   2. You can download your records up to 5 times.
   3. To download your records:
      1. Click on the records package
      2. Click on the *Download* button beside the file(s)
   4. If your records are password protected, you will require a password to open the pdf document.
      1. *The password to open the pdf is located in your first email's Response Letter.*
   5. It is recommended that you download and save your records so you do not have to return to the SFTS each time to view.
5. If your records are password protected, please consult your .pdf software's user manual on how to remove the password/encryption.

**Troubleshooting**

* If the hyperlink to the SFTS site does not open, try to access the site on a different web browser such as Chrome, or Firefox or Safari.
* Your temporary SFTS account expires after 7 days unless the account is logged into again or receives a new package. Your account will be deleted 7 days after it has been marked as expired. Once it is deleted, you will need to have a new ad-hoc account created - contact the FOI Analyst identified in the response letter.
* If you have forgotten your password but your account is still active:
  + You can use the “Request a password change” link on the Login page.
  + An email will be sent to you providing you the URL to confirm the password change.
  + Passwords expire after 90 days.
* If you encounter technical issues, please call the technical support line at 250-387-7000 and select option 3. You will need to advise the representative that you are requesting assistance as an ad-hoc user of the BC Secure File Transfer Service.

# How to Request a Review

# with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

If you have any questions regarding your request please contact the analyst assigned to your file. The analyst’s name and telephone number are listed in the attached letter.

Pursuant to section 52 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA), you may ask the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review any decision, act, or failure to act with regard to your request under FOIPPA.

**Please note that you have 30 business days to file your review with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. In order to request a review please write to:**

Information and Privacy Commissioner

PO Box 9038 Stn Prov Govt

4th Floor, 947 Fort Street

Victoria BC V8W 9A4

Telephone 250 387-5629 Fax 250 387-1696

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's Office with:

1. A copy of your original request;
2. A copy of our response; and
3. The reasons or grounds upon which you are requesting the review

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Accessing the Records of Children or Incapable Adults**

**Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***

**IAO**: [Information Access Operations](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/open-government/open-information/freedom-of-information)

**MCFD**: [Ministry of Children and Family Development](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/children-and-family-development)

**FOIPPA**: [*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00)

**FOIPP Regulation**: [*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation*](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/loo93/loo93/155_2012)

**CFCSA***:* [*Child, Family and Community Service Act*](http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_96046_01)

**FLA**: [*Family Law Act*](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/lc/statreg/11025_01)

1. If my child is in the care of the MCFD, can I request access to his/her personal information?

If a child under 12 years of age is currently in the custody of the MCFD, you are not entitled to access to his or her personal information: see section 76(1) of the CFCSA. You may re-apply for access once the child is returned to your legal care.

1. Why do I need to provide the most current FLA court order or agreement to obtain my child’s records?

Section 5 of the FOIPPA, section 3 of the FOIPPA Regulation and section 76 of the CFCSA states that in order for one to exercise the right of a child under 12 years of age to access their personal information, one must meet two requirements:

* 1. that one is a person legally entitled to access the child’s information; and
  2. that one is acting on behalf of the child

If you are a guardian of your child as defined in section 39 of the FLA and you have parenting responsibilities for your child as defined in section 40 of the FLA then providing the most current FLA court order or agreement will satisfy section 3 of the FOIPPA Regulation.

1. What if I don’t have an FLA court order or agreement? Can I still obtain my child’s records?

Yes. Section 40 of the FLA states that unless a court order or agreement allocates guardianship and parental responsibilities differently, each child’s guardian may exercise all parental responsibilities with respect to the child, in consultation with the child’s other guardians unless consultation would be unreasonable or inappropriate in the circumstances.

1. Why do I have to explain why I want my child’s records?

Section 5 of the FOIPPA, section 3 of the FOIPP Regulation, and section 76 of the CFCSA indicate that a request for access to a child’s personal information ***must be made on the child’s behalf***. The rationale for requiring applicants to indicate how they are acting on behalf of the child is based on previous decisions of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, which have decided that an individual claiming to exercise the right of access to a record on behalf of another is required to be truly acting "on behalf of" that other person as opposed to acting in their own personal interests*.*

1. What if I want the records for a Family Court matter?

When a parent or other applicant indicates they require access to a child’s records for a court matter related to guardianship or parenting arrangements, the Ministry has been unable to conclude that the applicant is acting “on behalf” of the child for the purposes of section 5 of the FOIPPA, section 3 of the FOIPP Regulation, and section 76 of the CFCSA.

When IAO denies a parent or other applicant access to a child’s information because the applicant does not meet the legislative requirements for an access to information request, this does not close the door to the Court obtaining access to this information if needed to make a decision**.** Any party to a proceeding under the *Family Law Act* has the option of applying to the court for access to MCFD records for the purposes of a proceeding under that Act. However, that judicial process is completely separate from the access to information process under FOIPPA.

1. Why do I have to obtain the consent of my child who is over 12 years of age?

The CFCSA recognizes the right of a child 12 years and over to act on his or her own behalf unless he or she is incapable.

1. How do I get access to the personal information of my incapable child over 12 but under 19 years?

If a child is over 12, but under the age of 19 years, and is unable to understand and provide informed written consent, you will need to establish eligibility to act for an incapable minor under section 76 of the CFCSA, section 5 of FOIPPA and section 3 of the FOIPPA Regulations. You will need to complete the Guardian Declaration form.

1. How do I access the information of an incapable adult 19 years or over?

If an adult over 19 is unable to understand and provide informed written consent, you will need to establish eligibility to act for the person under section 4 of the FOIPP Regulation (see text box). You will need to provide a copy of your documentation (e.g. Representation Agreement) to enable IAO to proceed with your request.

**From the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation***

**Who may act for an adult**

**4** (1) In this section, “representative” means any of the following persons:

1. A committee appointed under the Patients Property Act;
2. A person acting under a power of attorney;
3. A litigation guardian;
4. A representation acting under a representation agreement, as defined in the Representation Agreement Act.

(2) A representative of an adult may act for the adult in relation to any of the following sections of the Act:

1. Section 5;
2. Section 10 (1) (d);
3. Section 26 (d);
4. Section 27 (1) (a) (i);
5. Section 29 (1);
6. Section 30.1 (a);
7. Section 32 (b);
8. Section 33.1 (1) (b).
9. A representative of an adult may exercise a power granted to the representative under subsection (2) of this section only if the power is within the scope of the representative’s duties or powers.

**If you have any questions about the above, please contact IAO**

**Email:**

[**FOI.requests@gov.bc.ca**](mailto:FOI.requests@gov.bc.ca)

**Mail:**

**Information Access Operations**

**PO Box 9569 Stn Prov Gov**

**Victoria BC V8W 9K1**

**Phone:**

**250 387-1321**

**Toll-Free within British Columbia:**

**1 833 283-8200**

***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***

**How to make a request**

**5** (1) To obtain access to a record, the applicant must make a written request that

(a) provides sufficient detail to enable an experienced employee of the public body, with a reasonable effort, to identify the records sought,

(b) provides written proof of the authority of the applicant to make the request, if the applicant is acting on behalf of another person in accordance with the regulations, and

(c) is submitted to the public body that the applicant believes has custody or control of the record.

(2) The applicant may ask for a copy of the record or ask to examine the record.

***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation***

**Who may act for a minor**

**3** (1) A guardian of a minor may act for the minor in relation to any of the following sections of the Act if the minor is incapable of acting under that section:

(a) section 5;

(b) section 10 (1) (d);

(c) section 26 (d);

(d) section 27 (1) (a) (i);

(e) section 29 (1);

(f) section 30.1 (a);

(g) section 32 (b);

(h) section 33.1 (1) (b).

(2) A guardian of a minor may exercise a power granted to the guardian under subsection (1) of this section only if the power is within the scope of the guardian's duties or powers.

***Child, Family and Community Service Act***

#### Who can act for a child

**76** (1) A person, other than a director, who has legal care of a child under 12 years of age may, on behalf of the child, exercise the child's rights under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

(a) to be given access to information about the child in a record,

(b) to consent to the disclosure of that information, and

(c) to request the correction of that information.

(2) A person, other than a director, who has legal care of a child 12 years of age or older may, on behalf of the child, exercise the child's rights under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

(a) to be given access to information about the child in a record,

(b) to consent to the disclosure of that information, and

(c) to request correction of that information if the child is incapable of exercising those rights.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Accessing Records of Another Person 12 Years of Age or Older and**

**Informed Consent**

**Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***

1. What does informed consent mean and why is it required?

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) Policy and Procedures Manual, in the context of Sections 32, 33 and 33.1 (1)(b), deals with consent to the use and disclosure of personal information. The concept of “informed consent” involves ensuring that a person who authorizes the release of their personal information fully understands the nature of the personal information to be disclosed. Informed consent is required so Information Access Operations (IAO) can determine if the above conditions have been met. IAO’s Authorization for Release of Records form describes in detail the types of personal records held by the Ministry enabling individuals to indicate specifically which personal records the Ministry is authorized to disclose.

FOIPP Policy Interpretation:

1. A public body must ensure that personal information in its custody or under its control is disclosed only as permitted under section 33.1, 33.2 or 33.3.
2. Section 33.1(1)(b) provides that a public body may disclose personal information if the individual whose information is being requested consents to the disclosure.
3. **Any** [**consent**](http://www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/priv_leg/manual/definitions/def.page?#consent) **by an individual must be an informed consent, which must include informing the individual of:**
   1. **the exact nature and extent of personal information held by the public body about the individual; and**
   2. **the proposed disclosure of the personal information.**
4. The absence of consent shall be interpreted as the absence of authorization. Where the person concerned has not consented to a disclosure of the personal information, public bodies cannot assume consent to the disclosure.

2. What other options are available?

* A court order for production of records held by the Ministry can be sought.
* The third party’s representing counsel can submit a request on behalf of their client for the requested records with a signed Authorization for Release of Records form.

3. Are there other requirements for a consent to be considered valid under FOIPPA?

Where an individual is seeking a third party adult’s personal information and is relying on a consent form for that purpose, section 11 of the FOIPPA Regulation applies with respect to the adequacy of the consent form itself.  
  
**FOIPPA Regulation 11:**    
(1)  For the purposes of section 26 (d), 30.1 (a), 32 (b) and 33.1 (1) (b) of the Act, consent must

(a) be in writing

(b) be done in a manner that specifies

(i)  the personal information for which the individual is providing consent, and

(ii) the date on which the consent is effective and, if applicable, the date on which the consent expires.

A consent must also:

1. Clearly identify the individual providing the consent (Full Name and Date of Birth);
2. Be signed by the individual and be dated within the last 6 months;
3. Accurately state to whom the personal information may be disclosed;
4. Specify how the personal information may be used; and
5. State the jurisdiction (provincially or internationally) to which the personal information will be disclosed (if applicable).

***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act***

**How to make a request**

**5** (1) To obtain access to a record, the applicant must make a written request that

(a) provides sufficient detail to enable an experienced employee of the public body, with a reasonable effort, to identify the records sought,

(b) provides written proof of the authority of the applicant to make the request, if the applicant is acting on behalf of another person in accordance with the regulations, and

(c) is submitted to the public body that the applicant believes has custody or control of the record.

(2) The applicant may ask for a copy of the record or ask to examine the record.

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation**

**Who may act for an adult**

4  (1) In this section, "representative" means any of the following persons:

(a) a committee appointed under the [*Patients Property Act*](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96349_01);

(b) a person acting under a power of attorney;

(c) a litigation guardian;

(d) a representative acting under a representation agreement, as defined in the [*Representation Agreement Act*](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96405_01).

(2) A representative of an adult may act for the adult in relation to any of the following sections of the Act:

(a) section 5;

(b) section 10 (1) (d);

(c) section 26 (d);

(d) section 27 (1) (a) (i);

(e) section 29 (1);

(f) section 30.1 (a);

(g) section 32 (b);

(h) section 33.1 (1) (b).

(3) A representative of an adult may exercise a power granted to the representative under subsection (2) of this section only if the power is within the scope of the representative's duties or powers.

**Consent respecting personal information**

**11**  (1) For the purposes of section 26 (d), 30.1 (a), 32 (b) and 33.1 (1) (b) of the Act, consent must

(a) be in writing, and

(b) be done in a manner that specifies

(i) the personal information for which the individual is providing consent, and

(ii) the date on which the consent is effective and, if applicable, the date on which the consent expires.

(2) In addition to the requirements of subsection (1) of this section, for the purposes of

(a) section 26 (d) of the Act, consent must be done in a manner that specifies

(i) who may collect the personal information, and

(ii) the purpose of the collection of the personal information,

(b) section 30.1 (a) of the Act, consent must be done in a manner that specifies

(i) who may store or access the personal information, as applicable,

(ii) if practicable, the jurisdiction in which the personal information may be stored or from which the personal information may be accessed, as applicable, and

(iii) the purpose of the storage of or access to the personal information,

(c) section 32 (b) of the Act, consent must be done in a manner that specifies the use of the personal information, and

(d) section 33.1 (1) (b) of the Act, consent must be done in a manner that specifies

(i) to whom the personal information may be disclosed,

(ii) if practicable, the jurisdiction to which the personal information may be disclosed, and

(iii) the purpose of the disclosure of the personal information.

(3) Subject to subsection (4), a consent under section 33.1 (1) (b) of the Act that was given before the date this regulation comes into force and is still effective on the date this regulation comes into force, continues to be effective in accordance with its terms.

(4) Unless a consent described in subsection (3) complies with the requirements set out in subsections (1) and (2) (d) within one year after the date this regulation comes into force, the consent ceases to be effective on the date that is one year after the date this regulation comes into force.