



Yukon
Ombudsman



Yukon
Information
and Privacy
Commissioner



Yukon
Public Interest
Disclosure
Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 17, 2020 (*Updated March 18, 2020*)

Actions being taken by Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner in response to COVID-19

WHITEHORSE – The Yukon Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner is taking a number of steps to respond to evolving circumstances related to COVID-19.

In her role as Information and Privacy Commissioner, Diane McLeod-McKay is issuing a guidance document for public bodies and custodians. It outlines provisions in Yukon’s privacy laws that authorize the disclosure of personal information and personal health information in an emergency. (On March 18, 2020, Yukon’s Chief Medical Officer of Health [declared](#) a public health emergency under section 4.3 of the *Public Health and Safety Act*.)

“My goal in releasing this guidance is to reduce any confusion about what authority is provided in this regard by the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Health Information Privacy and Management Act*,” said McLeod-McKay. “I have informed the Yukon Chief Medical Officer of Health of this guidance document and invited his office, as well as any public bodies and custodians, to contact my office with any questions.”

In addition, McLeod-McKay is issuing a second guidance document for employees of public bodies and custodians who are handling personal information and personal health information as they work from home. The goal is to ensure these workers and their employers take appropriate steps to secure personal information or personal health information that is used while employees work from home.

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Both guidance documents are available on the Information and Privacy Commissioner's website at www.ombudsman.yk.ca. The guidance on disclosure of information in an emergency is located [here](#) and the guidance on working remotely is located [here](#).

As well, in light of national and global efforts to implement "social distancing", McLeod-McKay is asking Yukoners to contact her office by phone or by email rather than in person.

"If citizens have complaints they want to bring to our attention under any of our mandates, or if they have questions about our mandates, for the immediate future I recommend they contact us by phone or email rather than visiting our office in person," added McLeod-McKay. "I would also remind Yukoners that email is not a secure form of communication, so emails should not include sensitive personal information. Telephone is the preferred method of communication at this time."

The contact information for the Yukon Office of the Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner, and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner is:

Phone: 867-667-8468

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The Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner, and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner is an independent officer of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. For more information, please go to <http://www.ombudsman.yk.ca/>.

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