

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

How do you keep my information safe and secure?

We keep your personal information safe and secure in the following ways:

- Only staff who need the information to do their jobs have access to your personal information.
- Information is password protected and several levels of security are established based on the roles and responsibilities of staff.
- Our offices have physical security procedures in place.
- Our staff are trained to keep your personal information private and confidential.

We are committed to treating you with respect and courtesy. We are committed to providing the **highest level of service.**

How long do you keep my personal information?

We keep your personal information for as long as we continue to serve you. When you no longer need our services, we keep your information for a set period depending on the program. We then dispose of your information, either by destroying it or storing it for historical purposes.

Can I see what information you have about me?

Yes. If you want to see the information we have about you, ask your caseworker or social worker. You can also contact the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Administrator at the address below if you

- want to see your personal information or request a copy of your file or part of it
- want to complain about how we have handled your personal information
- have questions about our privacy policies

Contact Information and Resources

Information Services and FOIPOP

PO Box 696

Halifax, NS B3J 2T7

(902) 424-5558

e-mail: CS_FOIPOP@gov.ns.ca

www.gov.ns.ca/coms

We Value Your Privacy

Read this brochure to find out about your rights to privacy and our privacy practices.



We *need to collect* your personal information to be able to **provide you with service.** We take care to **protect your privacy** when we collect, use, disclose, and store your personal information.

What is my personal information?

Personal information means anything we record about you. This may include

- your name, address, and telephone number
- your race, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, and marital status
- a number or symbol we assign to you, such as a case number
- your health, educational, financial, or employment history
- someone's opinion about you, such as an employment or housing reference

Why do you collect my personal information?

We collect your personal information to provide you with a service. For example, we collect your personal information to

- assess your eligibility for income or housing assistance
- consider you for educational or job opportunities
- help with your special needs
- respond to referrals of some sort

How do you use my personal information?

We use your personal information for the purpose it was collected. We may use your personal information for another purpose. In some cases, a law may allow us to use your personal information without your permission. Some ways we may use your personal information are to

- give you other benefits you may qualify for
- see how our programs are working, such as by conducting surveys
- do research
- respond to an emergency

How and when do I give my consent?

When you apply for our services, we collect your personal information directly from you. At the same time we ask you to sign a consent or application form.

If you contact us by telephone, we ask for your consent during the telephone conversation.

Your consent allows us to use and share information with others to find out if you qualify for our programs and services.

How and when do you disclose my personal information?

In general, your personal information is only disclosed to you, if you request it, and to others with your consent. We may disclose your personal information without your consent if a law gives us that right. However, this would be rare, such as responding to an emergency.

Is my consent always necessary?

No, not always. We may not need your consent if

- a law gives us the right to collect, use, or disclose your personal information — for example, to protect a child under the *Children and Family Services Act*
- we need your information to respond to an emergency
- a treaty or agreement allows us to use your information, such as an agreement with the federal government
- we need to help a law enforcement body in an investigation
- we need to comply with a subpoena
- we need to collect a debt
- we need to protect anyone's health and safety
- we need to contact your next of kin

We look carefully at each circumstance where your information may be disclosed without your consent before releasing any personal information about you.

In general, **your personal information** is only disclosed to you, if you request it, and to others *with your consent*.