



Information Access and Privacy Services

Annual Report
2024/25

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Letter from the Minister

I am pleased to provide the 2024/25 annual report for Information Access and Privacy (IAP) Services. In the pages that follow, you will find details of the work managed by IAP Services through the year on behalf of Nova Scotians. We have seen a significant increase in the number of access requests over the past few years from about 2,700 requests in 2022/23 to over 3,800 received this year. There has also been an escalation in privacy concerns in the face of new cyber security threats. Regardless, our IAP team continues to strive to provide the best possible service to citizens and government clients alike.

I want to thank them all for their hard work and dedication.

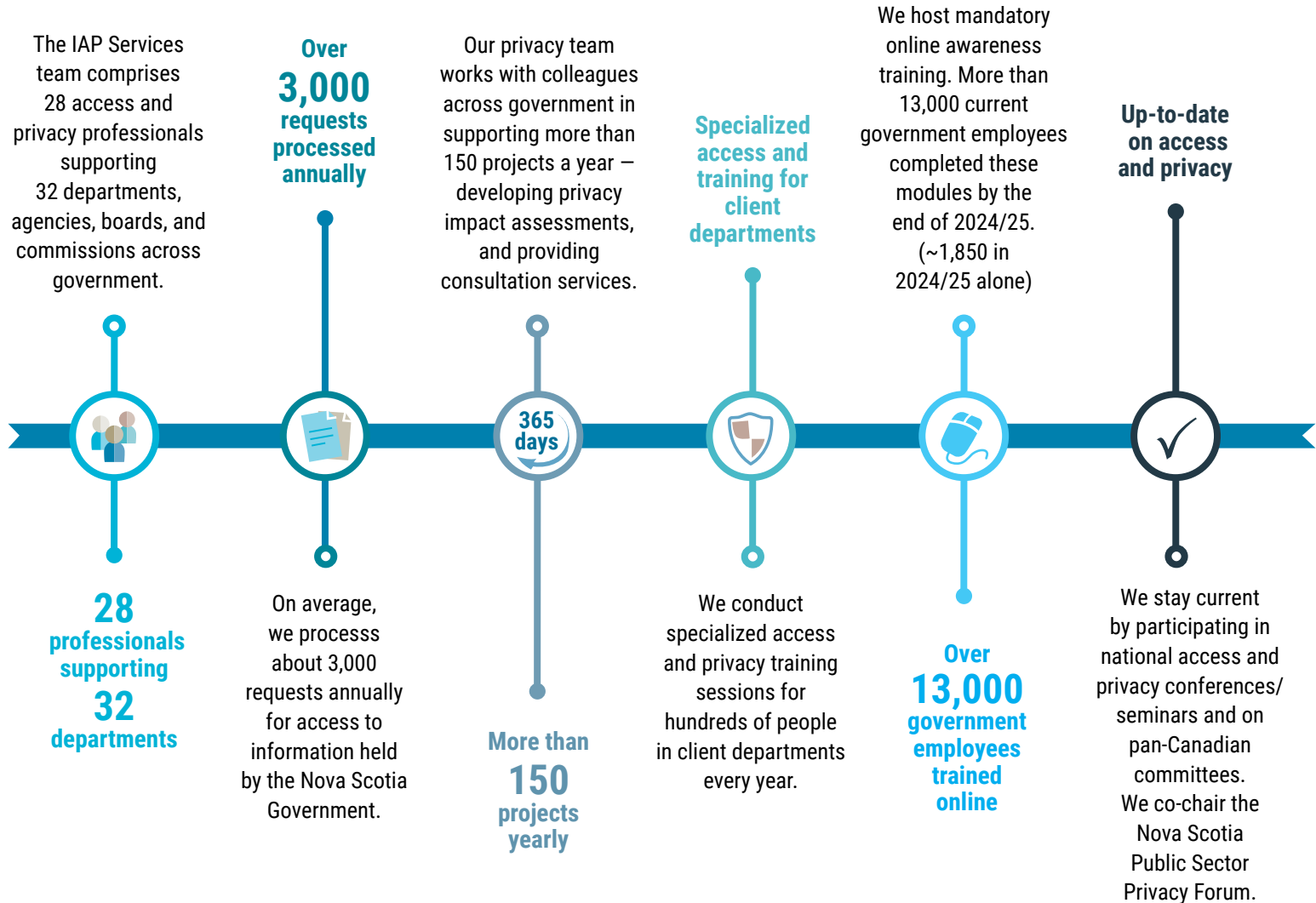
I also want to note that government continues to process the vast majority of access requests within legislated timelines. This past year, the team completed 89 per cent of the requests on time with 80 per cent taking 30 days or less to complete. The Province is among the best in the country in terms of response rates. We remain committed to providing Nova Scotians with timely responses to all information requests while protecting the rights of those we serve.



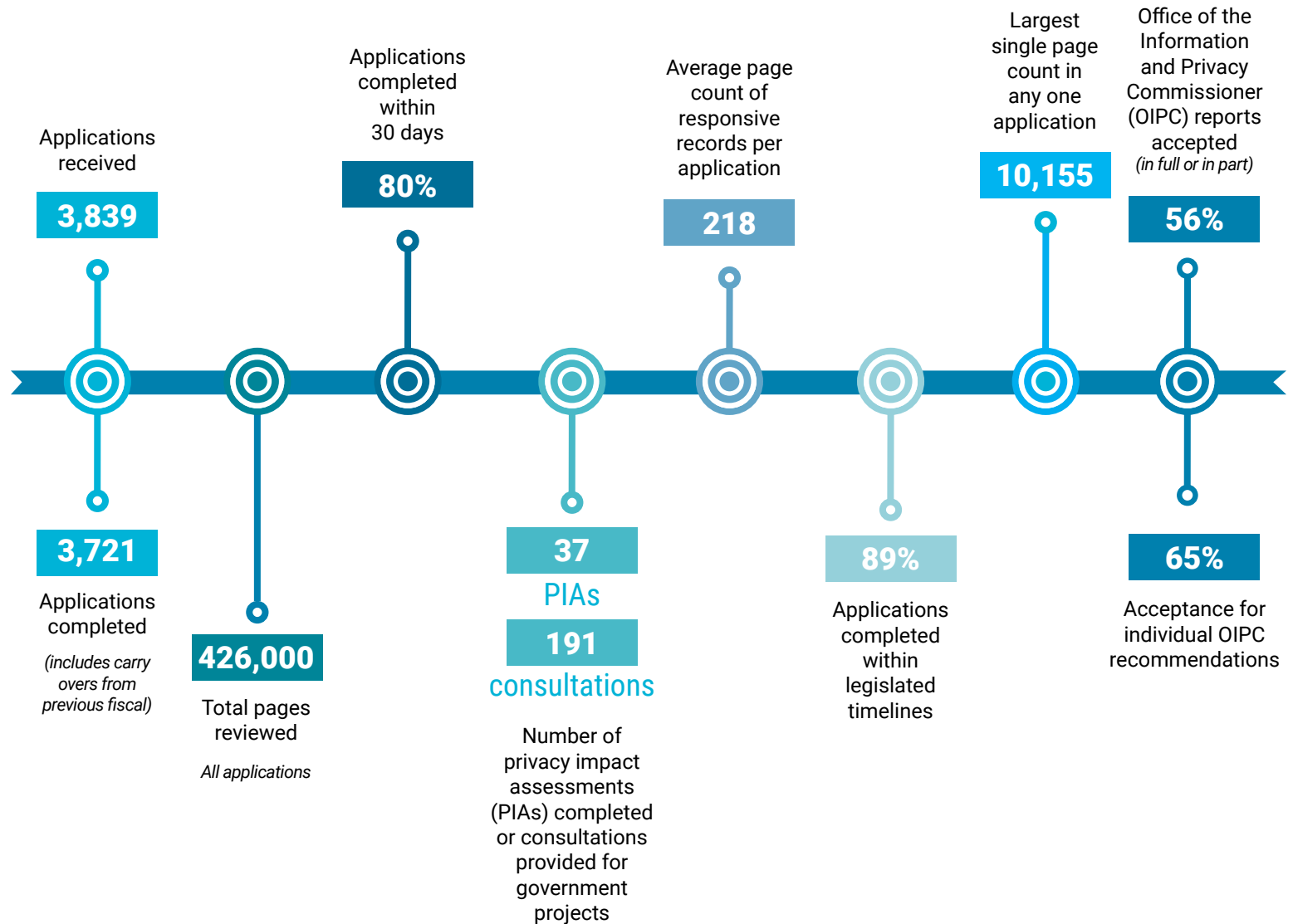
Hon. Jill Balser

Minister of Service Nova Scotia

About IAP Services



A Statistical Snapshot for 2024/25



FOIPOP Statistics for the Government of Nova Scotia

Applications Received and Completed

Government Departments*



■ 2022/23 ■ 2023/24 ■ 2024/25

**Includes the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Build Nova Scotia, Invest Nova Scotia, Link, and the Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency. IAP Services provides access and privacy services to these agencies/Crown corporations on a cost-recovery basis.*

Compliance and 30-day Response Rates

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Applications completed in compliance with legislation	2,479	2,960	3,321
Applications completed in 0–30 days	2,178	2,649	2,968
Total applications completed	2,732	3,316	3,721

Compliance Rate

While compliance and 30-day response rates are both tracked, the compliance rate gives the most accurate picture of how well government does in processing Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) applications overall. The compliance rate is the only comprehensive measure of processing times according to the full set of time deadlines and authorized extensions that are available under the legislation.

30-day Response Rate

The 30-day turnaround rate is the initial measure of performance. It captures the time it takes to respond to an applicant in the first 30 days of the FOIPOP application process.

Extensions

The FOIPOP Act recognizes that extra time is sometimes required to process access requests beyond the 30-day timeline because

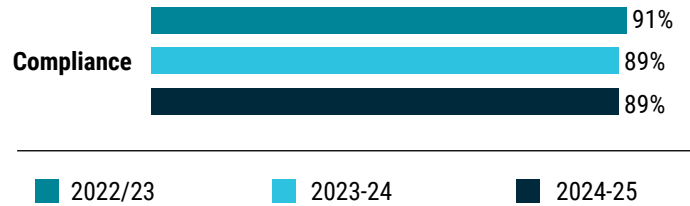
- a wide-ranging request for many document types over many years means searching large record volumes in multiple program areas;
- one application sent to all departments requires broad consultation with other public bodies;
- more information can sometimes be needed from the applicant to clarify the scope and identify responsive records;
- responsive records could require consultations with individuals or organizations outside of government.

In 2024/25, 89 per cent of all files were completed on time (80 per cent within 30 calendar days, 9 per cent within 60 days, and less than 1 per cent beyond 60 days with the approval of the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner).¹

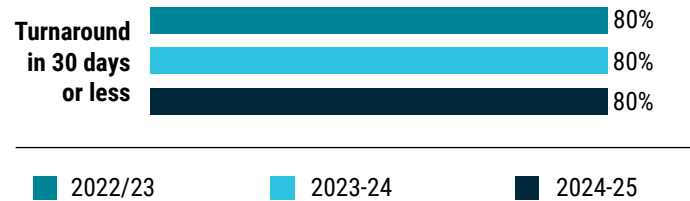
¹While not all jurisdictions report publicly (or include both compliance and 30-day rates in their reports), Nova Scotia compares favourably to those that do: Alberta reported 65 per cent completed in 30 calendar days; New Brunswick reported 44 per cent in 30 business days; Newfoundland and Labrador had 80 per cent in 20 business days and 88 per cent overall compliance; Ontario reported 67 per cent in 30 calendar days and 75 per cent compliance; British Columbia had 84 per cent.

Government Departments / Clients of IAP Services

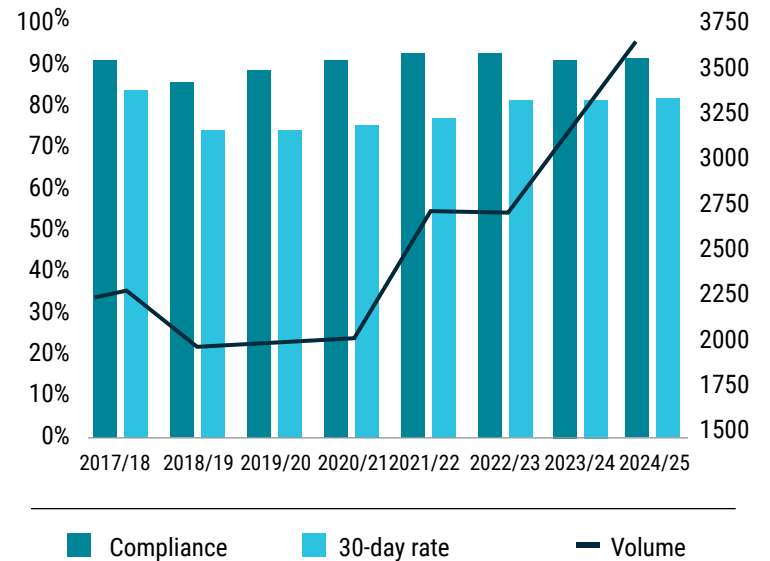
Government Departments/Clients of IAP Services



Government Departments/Clients of IAP Services



Trends - Response Times and Volume of Requests



FOIPOP Applications Received by Each Department/Client of IAP Services

Department	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Advanced Education	9	16	17
Agriculture	18	34	23
Art Gallery of Nova Scotia	4	1	1
Build Nova Scotia ²	11	18	10
Communications Nova Scotia ³	13	13	7
Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage	22	32	15
Cyber Security and Digital Solutions ⁴	n/a	7	4
Develop Nova Scotia ⁵	2	n/a	n/a
Education and Early Childhood Development	46	92	50
Emergency Management ⁶	n/a	n/a	3
Energy ⁷	n/a	n/a	2
Environment and Climate Change	1,129	1,548	1,574
Equity and Anti-Racism ⁸	11	0	n/a
Executive Council Office	11	8	22
Finance and Treasury Board	47	44	38
Fisheries and Aquaculture	18	21	18
Growth and Development ⁹	29	17	23
Health and Wellness	202	125	132

² Build Nova Scotia was established as a Crown corporation as of December 1, 2022, replacing the previous Nova Scotia Lands Inc. and Develop Nova Scotia.

³ Communications Nova Scotia was disbanded in February 2025, with coordination of communications moved to Executive Council Office.

⁴ The Department of Cyber Security and Digital Solutions was created in May 2023; prior to that, they were a part of the former Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services department.

⁵ In 2022, Develop Nova Scotia became part of the new Crown corporation known as Build Nova Scotia.

⁶ Emergency Management was established as a department in September 2024.

⁷ On August 31, 2021, Lands and Forestry and Energy and Mines were merged into the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR). On December 11, 2024, Energy became a separate department and DNRR became the Department of Natural Resources.

⁸ The Office of Equity and Anti-Racism became part of the Department of Justice in May 2023.

⁹ Prior to December 2024, Growth and Development was known as Economic Development. In December 2024, the department also assumed responsibility for Housing (which had previously been with Municipal Affairs).

Department	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Healthcare Professional Recruitment	5	8	4
Intergovernmental Affairs	4	9	1
Invest Nova Scotia ¹⁰	13	9	7
Justice	158	278	508
Labour, Skills and Immigration	66	63	57
Link ¹¹	n/a	n/a	1
L'nu Affairs	2	11	7
Municipal Affairs ¹²	86	152	152
Natural Resources ¹³	76	66	52
Nova Scotia Business Inc. ¹⁴	2	n/a	n/a
Opportunities and Social Development ¹⁵	419	462	656
Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency ¹⁶	6	56	71
Premier's Office	76	51	84
Priorities and Planning ¹⁷	1	0	n/a
Public Prosecution Services	14	42	58
Public Service Commission	26	39	32
Public Works	72	98	103
Seniors and Long-Term Care	27	28	20
Service Efficiency ¹⁸	2	0	1
Service Nova Scotia ¹⁹	75	75	86

¹⁰ Invest Nova Scotia was established as a Crown corporation as of December 1, 2022, replacing the previous Nova Scotia Business Inc. (NSBI) and Innovacorp.

¹¹ Link became a client of IAP Services in March 2025 – prior to that they were known as the Joint Regional Transportation Agency.

¹² From August 31, 2022, until December 11, 2024, the Department of Municipal Affairs also included Housing. In December 2024, Housing became part of Growth and Development.

¹³ On August 31, 2021, Lands and Forestry and Energy and Mines were merged into DNRR. On December 11, 2024, Energy became a separate department and DNRR became the Department of Natural Resources.

¹⁴ After December 1, 2022, requests related to the former NSBI were received by the newly established Invest Nova Scotia.

¹⁵ Prior to December 2024, Opportunities and Social Development was known as the Department of Community Services.

¹⁶ Prior to February 23, 2021, the Department of Municipal Affairs also included Housing. After February 23, 2021, Housing became part of the new Department of Infrastructure and Housing. On August 31, 2022, Housing returned to the Department of Municipal Affairs and by the end of 2022 the new Nova Scotia

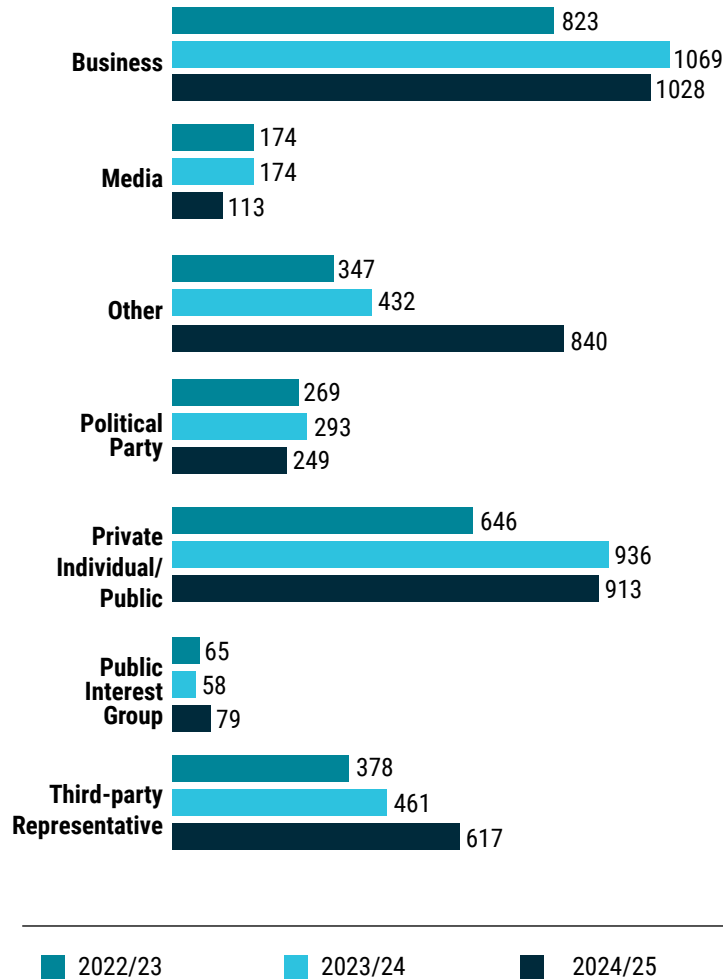
¹⁷ The functions of the Office of Priorities and Planning were incorporated into Executive Council Office in February 2025.

¹⁸ Prior to December 2024, Service Efficiency was known as the Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Efficiency.

¹⁹ Prior to May 2023, Service Nova Scotia was Service Nova Scotia and Internal Services and included the Nova Scotia Digital Services (NSDS). In May 2023, NSDS formed a new department known as Cyber Security and Digital Solutions.

Applicant Type*

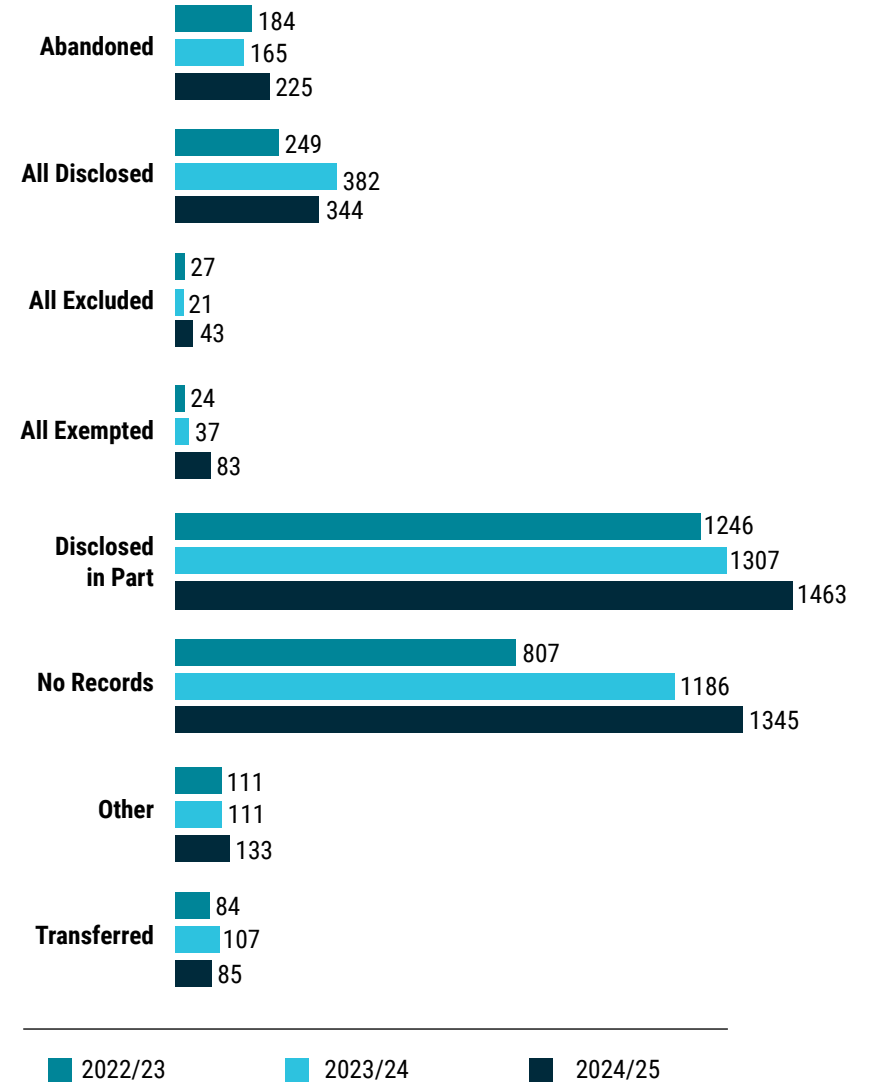
Government Departments/Clients of IAP Services



*Applicant categories are self-identified when individuals submit their applications online.

Outcomes - Decision Type

Government Departments/Clients of IAP Services



Files at Review with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC)

FOIPOP Applications in Review

Of the 3,721 applications completed by departments in 2024/25, an estimated 6 per cent (208 files) went to review.

IAP Services Total FOIPOP files

Fiscal Year	Completed FOIPOP Files	Reviews Requested	Rate
2022/23	2,732	58	2.0%
2023/24	3,316	125	4.0%
2024/25	3,721	208	6.0%

A portion of the files (approx. 34 in total or about 1 per cent) that went to the OIPC were complaints about deemed refusals; that is when a public body misses a deadline without authorization. Most deemed refusals are resolved informally and the files are closed once the public body has issued its decision to the applicant.

Acceptance Rate – OIPC Review Recommendations

When a FOIPOP applicant disagrees with a public body's decision and asks the OIPC to conduct a review, the OIPC prepares a report with recommendations. The OIPC has set 65 per cent as the target acceptance rate for its recommendations. The OIPC issued 15 reports in 2024/25. Of those, 11 were directed at clients served by IAP Services. Of those 11 reports, public bodies accepted the

recommendations 56 per cent of the time. Contained within the 11 reports were 20 individual recommendations – 13 were accepted by government. This met the OIPC's 65 per cent acceptance rate.

OIPC Review Report Recommendations – Acceptance Rate by IAP Services' Client Departments

Fiscal Year	OIPC Review Reports	Total Number of Recommendations	Acceptance Rate by Report	Acceptance Rate by Recommendation
2022/23	4	8	75% in full or in part	75% (6 out of 8 recommendations accepted)
2023/24	11	22	91% in full or in part	73% (16 out of 22 recommendations accepted)
2024/25	11	20	56% in full or in part	65% (13 out of 20 recommendations)

Fees– Government of Nova Scotia

	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25
Application Fees	\$9,490.00	\$13,490.00	\$13,055.00
Processing Fees	\$18,942.00	\$19,447.00	\$23,340.00
Total	\$28,432.00	\$32,937.00	\$36,395.00

No fees apply if an applicant asks for their own personal information.

An applicant requesting general information must pay a mandatory application fee of five dollars and additional fees may be charged for processing. The fees cover the work of locating, retrieving, preparing, and shipping the record.

Of the 3,721 applications closed last year, processing fees were collected for 101 of them, or less than 3 per cent.

FOIPOP Statistics for Other Public Bodies and Municipal Entities

Agencies, Boards, and Commissions; Health Authorities; Universities and Colleges; and Regional Centres for Education

Most public bodies outside the provincial government that receive FOIPOP applications track their own applications independently. The data presented in this section originated with those organizations that reported their fiscal 2024/25 statistical information to IAP Services for inclusion in this report.

In some instances, the total number completed may not match the total number of applications received. This is because some applications were abandoned, transferred, or carried over to the next reporting period.

Applications Received and Completed by Other Public Bodies under the FOIPOP Act

Agencies, Boards, and Commissions	FY 2024/25 Received	FY 2024/25 Completed
Divert Nova Scotia	0	0
Elections Nova Scotia	30	30
Halifax Harbour Bridges	1	0
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission	4	4
Nova Scotia Legal Aid	1	1
Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation	5	5
Nova Scotia Securities Commission	0	0
Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board	0	0
Office of the Police Complaints Commission	2	2
Serious Incident Response Team	1	1
Events East	1	1
Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal	1	1
Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia	18	18

Health Authorities	FY 2024/25 Received	FY 2024/25 Completed
IWK Health	10	7
Nova Scotia Health (NSH)	136	92

Universities, Colleges, and Regional Centres for Education	FY 2024/25 Received	FY 2024/25 Completed
Acadia University	7	3
Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education	13	11
Atlantic School of Theology	-	-
Cape Breton University	3	2
Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education	51	38
Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education	74	60
Conseil scolaire acadien provincial	2	2
Dalhousie University	41	36
Halifax Regional Centre for Education	-	-
Mount Saint Vincent University	-	-
NSCAD	7	0
Nova Scotia Community College	11	5
St. Francis Xavier University	4	2
Saint Mary's University	25	25
South Shore Regional Centre for Education	27	24
Straight Regional Centre for Education	15	14
Tri-County Regional Centre for Education	38	34
Université Sainte-Anne	0	0
University of King's College	2	2

FOIPOP Statistics for Municipal Entities

Municipal entities are subject to Part XX (20) of the Municipal Government Act (MGA), which is similar to the FOIPOP Act. These entities track their own applications for access to information independently of the statistics kept by government departments. Municipalities presented the following statistics to IAP Services for 2024/25. In some instances, the total number of completed may not match the total number of applications received. This is because applications were abandoned, transferred, or carried over to the next reporting period.

Applications Received and Completed by Other Public Bodies under the FOIPOP Act

Name of Municipal Entity	FY 2024/25 Received	FY 2024/25 Completed
Amherst Police Department	18	15
Annapolis Royal Police	0	0
Bridgewater Police Service	24	24
Cape Breton Regional Municipality	25	15
Halifax Regional Municipality	366	346
Halifax Regional Police	484	469
Halifax Water Commission	12	7
Kentville Police Services	13	13
Municipality of the County Annapolis	3	2
Municipality of the County of Antigonish	-	-
Municipality of the County of Colchester	30	17
Municipality of the County of Cumberland	4	3
Municipality of the County of Inverness	3	3
Municipality of the County of Kings	-	-
Municipality of the County of Pictou	1	1

Name of Municipal Entity	FY 2024/25 Received	FY 2024/25 Completed
Municipality of the County of Richmond	6	6
Municipality of the District of Argyle	13	9
Municipality of the District of Barrington	0	0
Municipality of the District of Chester	21	18
Municipality of the District of Clare	0	0
Municipality of the District of Digby	0	0
Municipality of the District of East Hants	1	1
Municipality of the District of Guysborough	1	0
Municipality of the District of Lunenburg	32	25
Municipality of the District of West Hants	16	10
Municipality of the District of Yarmouth	0	0
New Glasgow Police Services	37	35
Region of Queens Municipality	2	1
South Shore Regional Library Board	-	-
Town of Amherst	1	0
Town of Annapolis Royal	0	0
Town of Berwick	0	0
Town of Bridgewater	5	4
Town of Clark's Harbour	0	0
Town of Digby	0	0
Town of Kentville	5	5
Town of Lockeport	0	0
Town of Lunenburg	6	6
Town of Mahone Bay	3	3

Name of Municipal Entity	FY 2024/25 Received	FY 2024/25 Completed
Town of Middleton	0	0
Town of Mulgrave	0	0
Town of New Glasgow	2	2
Town of Oxford	0	0
Town of Pictou	0	0
Town of Port Hawkesbury	0	0
Town of Stellarton	0	0
Town of Stewiacke	0	0
Town of Trenton	0	0
Town of Truro	6	6
Town of Westville	0	0
Town of Wolfville	7	7
Town of Yarmouth	0	0
Village of Bible Hill	0	0
Village of St. Peter's	1	1

Fees – Other Public Bodies

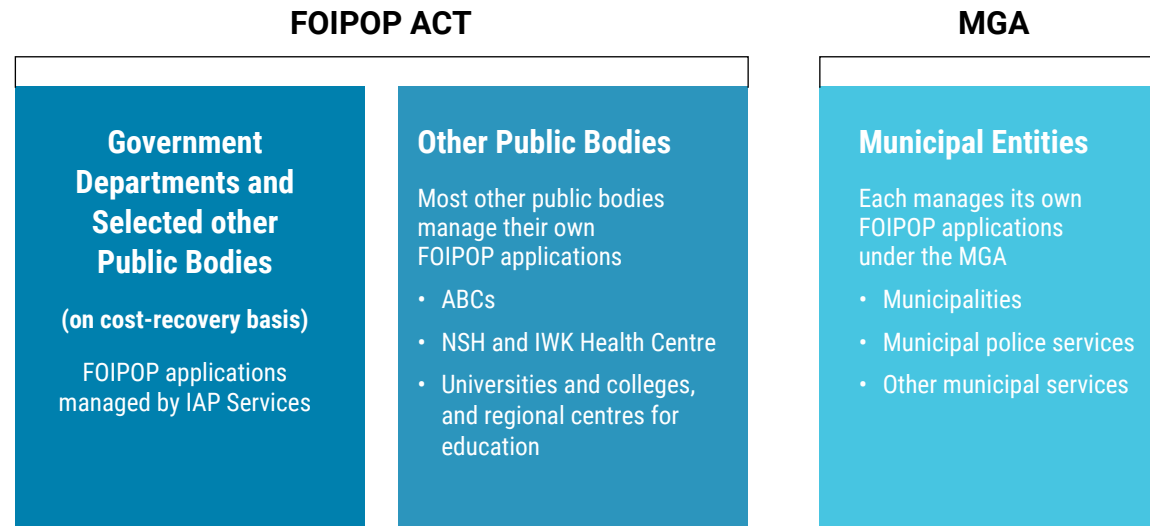
	Other Public Bodies	Municipal Entities (MGA)
Application Fees	\$ 905.00	\$ 3,653.00
Processing Fees	\$ 797.00	\$ 3,722.00
TOTAL	\$ 1,702.00	\$ 7,252.00

Note: Fees reflect both application and processing fees that were paid and reported to IAP Services by the other public bodies during the fiscal year.

Appendix – Understanding the Data

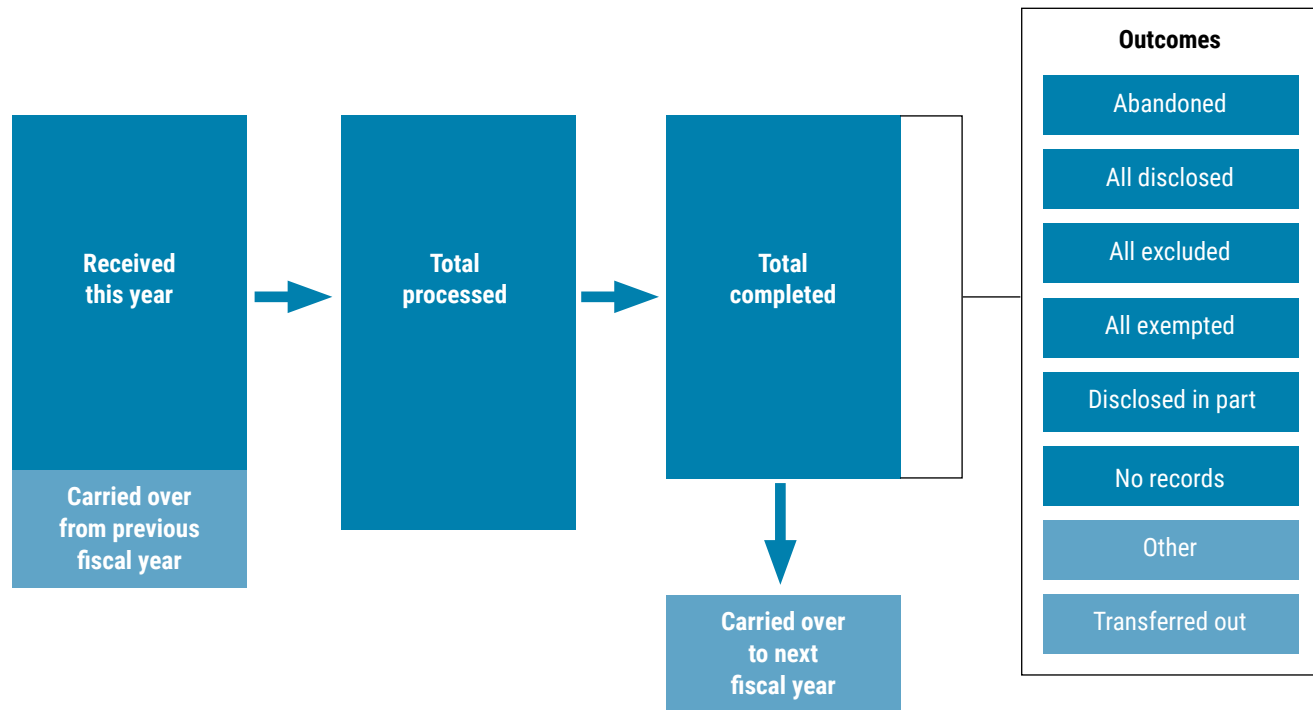
As in years past, this year’s report includes statistics on access to information applications received by provincial government departments; agencies, boards, and commissions (ABCs); and the municipal, academic, schools, and health sectors.

Other public bodies and municipal entities typically manage and track their own FOIPOP applications either under the FOIPOP Act or the MGA. Each year, the provincial government offers space in this annual report from IAP Services to include the statistics submitted by these other public entities.



How applications are received and processed

The following diagram shows how the government's FOIPOP applications are processed and explains key terms used throughout this report. The diagram illustrates how information is captured in our case-management system.



Outcomes – Decision types

The outcomes of an access to information request can be any one of the following decisions on disclosure:

Abandoned	The application may be abandoned for a variety of reasons, for example, if the applicant no longer wishes to proceed, has not paid the required processing fees, or has not responded to clarifying questions.
All disclosed	The relevant public body has released all requested information.
All excluded	<p>The FOIPOP Act does not apply to some kinds of information in the custody or control of a public body. This information is, therefore, excluded from the jurisdiction of the act. Excluded information ranges from information that is already published to records of the ombudsman or a record about a prosecution that is still underway.</p> <p>Or, the information may be governed by statutes that prevail over the FOIPOP Act, which excludes the information from the jurisdiction of the FOIPOP Act. The list of statutes that prevail over the act can be found in subsection 4A(2) of the FOIPOP Act and subsection 464A(2) in Part XX (20) of the MGA. Examples of information excluded in this way are maintenance-enforcement records and vital statistics.</p>
All exempted	The application is denied by the public body in accordance with one or more of the 10 limited exemptions.
Disclosed in part	Less than 100 per cent of the requested information has been released for one or more reasons. Because the presumption of the act is to disclose, access rights are limited by 10 reasons only, which are laid out specifically in the legislation as exemptions. These range from advice given by or to a public body, to health and safety or law enforcement, etc.
No record	The requested information does not exist.
Other	This is used when the outcome does not fit into one of the other categories or the information was provided outside the FOIPOP Act.
Transferred out	The application is valid but has been submitted to the wrong public body, and, therefore, has been transferred to the correct entity for processing.

Carried Over is Not Included in Outcomes: Applications not completed by March 31 of a fiscal year are carried over to the next reporting period. Carried-over is the difference between total applications received and total applications completed.