What is Privacy Breach?

Introduction

A privacy breach occurs when there is the intentional or unintentional unauthorized collection, use, disclosure, disposal, modification, reproduction, access or storage of personal information, that is in violation of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act or the Personal Information International Disclosure Protection (PIIDPA) Act or other legislation.

Some types of breaches are:

- Sending documents containing personal information in any way to the wrong person. For example, sending an email to the wrong address.

- Discussing someone else's personal information with any person, whether inside or outside the workplace, who does not have a need to know that information

- Data entry error or perhaps a technical error that results in someone getting someone else's information, such as on a permit or licence

What happens after a breach occurs?

Once a breach has been discovered there is a four-step process to resolve it. The steps are the following:

Step	Process
1. Contain the breach	• Alert supervisor and IAP Services staff • Assess the breach/gather information • Take steps to prevent further breach of information • Establish team to respond to the breach
2. Evaluate and assess the risk	• Determine what personal information was involved • Determine the cause and extent of the breach • Determine the affected individuals • Assess any foreseeable harm that may occur
3. Notify and report details	• Determine if notification is needed and if so, how/when and what to include • Determine if notification to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner is necessary
4. Investigate the cause	• Create a breach report that details the breach and response • Implement changes to prevent future breaches • Create a record of the breach occurrence

The first three steps are completed as soon as possible following a breach and will most likely be done simultaneously. The fourth step addresses longer-term solutions and prevention strategies.

How to report a breach

If you receive information in error or discover you have access to information that you should not have access to, then you should immediately contact IAP Services. You can call 902-424-3843 or email AskIAPServices@novascotia.ca

How to file a complaint

If you believe your privacy has been breached, you may make a complaint. You may file your complaint using the complaint form and submit it to Information Access and Privacy Services at the address listed on the form, or you can email your complaint to: AskIAPServices@novascotia.ca