

For immediate release

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OIPC launches consultation on large volume freedom of information requests

VICTORIA – The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC (OIPC) is launching a consultation focusing on the experiences that applicants and public bodies have with large volume freedom of information (FOI) requests.

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) requires FOI requests be fulfilled within 30 business days, unless certain exceptions apply.

Files with particularly large volumes, which can range into thousands of records, are one ground that public bodies could use to request a time extension. The interim framework will be more transparent for applicants and remove uncertainty about when they could expect their records.

The administration of time extensions can detract from processing the records and getting them into the hands of applicants. The goal is to reduce administration and increase transparency so that effort can be transitioned into getting the records to which applicants are legally entitled into their hands as quickly as possible.

As part of the consultation, the OIPC is seeking information from public bodies about how long it typically takes to respond to FOI requests, and how frequently time extensions are requested. From applicants, the OIPC is seeking information about their experiences to help the office improve the efficiency and transparency of this process.

Concurrent with this consultation, the OIPC is launching an interim time extension process for large volume requests that will involve clearer communication to applicants and public bodies about the time extension approvals, contingent upon periodic reporting to applicants and phased releases of records where possible. The OIPC will be collecting information about public body and applicant experiences with this interim process to inform permanent improvements.

Members of the public and public bodies interested in providing feedback can do so here::
<https://surveys.crcresearch.com/S2/?st=kgzAN%2FgoolGI58DXBDXA4TMM35It2LATScalYjUahOg%3D>

Time extension guidelines for public bodies: <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/documents/guidance-documents/1363>

Guide to OIPC Processes (FIPPA): <https://www.oipc.bc.ca/documents/guidance-documents/1519>

Infographic: Interim FOI time extension framework: <https://oipc.bc.ca/documents/infographics/3238>

Additional resources related to the new framework: <https://oipc.bc.ca/resources/interim-time-extension-framework/>

News Release

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