

Trust, transparency, and technology: Access to information in BC

9:30am Registration opens, with snacks provided by BC FIPA

10:00am Call to conference, territorial acknowledgment, & fireside chat



Michael Harvey
Information & Privacy
Commissioner for BC



John Tuck
Assistant Deputy Attorney General,
Legal Services Branch, BC Ministry of Attorney General

10:40am Access, AI, and accountability

Applicants and public bodies alike bear responsibility and accountability for how they participate in the access to information system under FIPPA, and interact with one another. The rapid emergence of generative AI and agentic AI as tools that are now broadly available is presenting both opportunities and challenges. This panel will explore the role of AI in access from all sides. What amounts to responsible use of AI and AI agents by an applicant? How should public bodies respond to AI-generated requests and submissions? How can public bodies use technology, including AI, to facilitate and expedite the access process? What are a public body's legal and ethical obligations in terms of providing access to AI-generated information?



Moderator:
Alexis Kerr,
Partner, Norton Rose
Fulbright



Greg Emery
CEO, Vivacity
Technologies



Michelle Schop
Data Operations Analyst,
PrivacyWorks



Kyle Friesen
Legal counsel,
Surrey Police
Services

11:40am Break

11:55am Reflecting on reconciliation and access: where we are, where we are going

Have you had the opportunity to explore reconciliation in the access to information context? This panel will review some of the ways that reconciliation is being – a could be – accounted for in the administration of access to information in British Columbia. We will explore the FOI applicant experience, data sovereignty and information sharing, cases that engage reconciliation, and how BC's Modern Treaty landscape may shape the dialogue in BC.



Moderator:
oline Twiss
Deputy
Commissioner,
OIPC



Murray Rankin
Lawyer, former Minister
of Indigenous Relations
and Reconciliation for BC,
former MP



Nicola Collins
Legal counsel,
Tsawwassen
First Nation



Jennifer Jansen
Manager of Government
and Legislative Services,
Tsawwassen First Nation



Kayla Black
Participant,
Spotlight:
Child Welfare

12:55pm Lunch

1:55pm On the record: FOI and journalism in BC

One of the key functions of FOI law is to facilitate journalism in the public interest. Canada and BC have rich traditions of investigative journalism grounded in FOI research. This research is often challenging, however, and journalists working on pressing stories often run up against barriers presented by the letter of FOI law, the complexities of FOI requests, and the nature of information management in public bodies. On this panel, experienced investigative journalists will discuss the importance and opportunities associated with FOI-based journalism, common challenges, and ideas for change.



Moderator:
Mike Larsen
President,
BC FIPA



Amanda Follet Hosgood
Northern BC Reporter,
The Tyee



Francesca Fionda
Data Lead, Spotlight: Child
Welfare

2:55pm Break (snacks provided by PrivacyWorks)

3:15pm Access frustrated: working with abusive, unreasonable, and vexatious behaviour

When a small minority of applicants consume a disproportionate amount of finite resources system-wide, there are fewer resources for bona fide requests and respectful conduct. At the same time, resource asymmetries between applicants and public bodies means that restrictions on the right of access requires careful oversight. This practical and frank discussion will discuss recent changes to FIPPA, recent OIPC guidance and decisions, and approaches from seasoned experts in the field.



Moderator:
Ethan Plato
Legal counsel,
OIPC



Kate Phipps
Partner, Arvay
Finlay



Matt Malone
Research Director, Digitalization,
Security & Democracy, Centre for
International Governance Innovation



Suzanne Kennedy
Partner, Harris
and Company

4:15pm Closing remarks