

FIPPA Faux-Pas



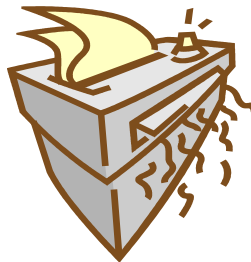
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Notice #2: What is Personal Information?

August 2008

Under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) there are **statutory rules for the collection, use, disclosure, storage and destruction of Personal Information (PI)**. In order to comply with the Act, it is necessary to **understand what constitutes PI** and to know **how long records containing PI must be retained under FIPPA**.

PI is information about an identifiable individual, including but not limited to name, home address, home telephone number, gender, age, marital status, date of birth, student number, employee number, educational and employment history. Student identification numbers and grades fall under the definition of PI, as do some student assignments and exams, since evaluative opinions are also considered PI.



What is not PI

PI does not include the name, title, business address, e-mail address, telephone number or designation of an individual that identifies the individual in an employment, business, professional or official capacity.

The **minimum period for retaining PI is one year** if:

- the PI has been used by the University
- the individual to whom the information relates **has not consented** to its earlier destruction (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 460, s. 5(1))

Please note that other operational or legal considerations may require a longer retention period than one year. The purpose of the minimum retention period under FIPPA is to ensure that the individual to whom the information relates has a reasonable opportunity to obtain access to the PI collected.

Receipt of any **unsolicited PI that is not used in any way can be destroyed (shredded) immediately.***

*The regulation states that personal information held by a university cannot be destroyed without authorization. (O Reg 459, s.3). Please consult with your director or department head.

Guidelines with respect to destruction of records containing PI will be the subject of a future notice. If you have any **doubt as to whether your records contain PI, please contact us**.

Your continued cooperation and collaboration is much appreciated. If you have any questions with respect to PI and its proper collection, use, disclosure, storage and destruction under FIPPA, please don't hesitate to contact the IPO.



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