Privacy at the University of Alberta – Highlights and Quick Tips
From the Information and Privacy Office ("IPO")

Here are some highlights and quick tips about how to protect the privacy and security of personal information that you use when you work or volunteer for the University of Alberta. For more information, please take a look at the IPO website, attend an IPO training session, or just ask the IPO.

In your affiliation with the University of Alberta you may come into contact with sensitive or confidential information including "personal information" such as student, employee or health information. Here are some important tips to protect this information:

1. **Respect the privacy of others** and treat personal information as if it was your own.

2. Only collect, use and access the **least amount of information** to perform your duties. Ask yourself, is this something I "need to know" or is it something "nice to know"?   For example, if you only need someone's age, collect that rather than their birthdate.

3. Before you collect someone's personal information, you need to **notify** them what you will use their personal information for. Generally, collect someone's personal information from them directly, and not from someone else. For information and a form to use, please see: https://www.ualberta.ca/why-ualberta/administration/information-and-privacy-office/collection-of-pi.

4. Only disclose personal information if it is consistent with why you collected it, if you have the person's written consent, or as otherwise authorized by law. For health information, you can disclose it to other health care providers for the purposes of continuing treatment and care. Only disclose the **least amount of information** necessary. For an informed consent form, please see https://www.ualberta.ca/why-ualberta/administration/information-and-privacy-office/forms.

5. Just because you have access to information through your job, it doesn't necessarily give you the right to look at the information for the sake of curiosity. Only access personal information if/when it is needed to do your job.
   - **Examples:** Updating your information in Bear Tracks would be appropriate as it is your personal information and not related to how you do your job; however, looking yourself up in an electronic medical record system is not appropriate. If you are asked by family and friends to look up their personal information from work resources to circumvent regular processes or give them extra information, this would not be considered an appropriate use; they should receive their personal information in the same way that any other member of the public receives personal information.

6. Take reasonable steps to make sure that personal information is accurate and complete before you rely on it to make a decision that affects someone. If the personal information you have about someone is wrong, that person has the right to have the information corrected.

7. If you use someone's personal information to make a decision about them, you have to keep it for at least a year.

8. Protect sensitive or confidential information according to the **sensitivity** of the information https://www.ualberta.ca/why-ualberta/administration/information-and-privacy-office/sensitivity-of-information.

9.   **Retain and dispose of personal information records in a secure manner.** See records policies and/or contact the Records Officer. Shred paper records when disposing of them. Do not put in recycle or regular garbage. Make sure you securely wipe electronic devices.

 10.   **Safeguard** personal information by doing the following:

- Limit access to those who need to know.
- Don't discuss confidential information in public areas.
- Protect your user IDs (including CCID) and passwords. You are responsible for all actions undertaken with your user ID. Do not share your password.
    - Encrypt digital records - **laptop encryption and mobile device encryption is a must!** – VP IT https://www.ualberta.ca/chief-information-security-officer/mobile-security
    - Remember that email is not a secure way to transmit sensitive personal information; sharing a document via Google Drive is more secure.   https://www.ualberta.ca/chief-information-security-officer/email-phishing/email-privacy
- Transport the minimum amount of personal information necessary.
- Transport confidential information securely by using locking devices and keeping devices or information with you at all times.
- When faxing or e-mailing, **double check number/e-mail address** to be sure it is accurate. When emailing a group of people, put email addresses in the "**bcc**" line instead of the "to" line.
- Lock your computer when you step away from your desk and log out of applications when you leave for the day.

    You can find more tips about safeguarding personal information at: https://www.ualberta.ca/why-ualberta/administration/information-and-privacy-office/safeguards

    Email Privacy and Security Best Practice Guidelines can be found here: https://www.ualberta.ca/chief-information-security-officer/email-phishing/email-privacy

11.   Report **privacy/security breaches** as soon as possible:
- https://privacyandsecurity.ualberta.ca/report-breach.html

12.   **Policies and procedures** that you should be familiar with:

- IT Security Office (VP IT) http://www.vpit.ualberta.ca/security/
- Information and Privacy Office https://www.ualberta.ca/why-ualberta/administration/information-and-privacy-office/policies-and-procedures

13.   Contracts with third parties who will have access to personal information must be reviewed by the IPO, click here to view UAPPOL Policy and then click on Contract Review Procedure. (https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/PoliciesProcedures/Pages/DispPol.aspx?PID=26)

14.   There are two privacy laws that impact information stored at the University of Alberta: the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and the *Health Information Act*. For more information on these Acts and how they apply to the University of Alberta please visit the IPO website at https://www.ualberta.ca/why-ualberta/administration/information-and-privacy-office

15.   Privacy and security training should be taken at the time of hire and refreshed every couple years. Privacy legislation and computer technology changes so refresher training is important! There is now online Privacy and Security Training and annual acknowledgement to be done. To do the training and find out more, please go here, https://privacyandsecurity.ualberta.ca/index.html.