

CHF BC Sample – Personal Information Protection Policy (remove header when adapting for use)

[Full name of housing co-op or letterhead]

Personal information protection policy

Purpose of the policy

To protect the dignity of members and the security of personal information the co-op may gather on individuals, in compliance with the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)* and its principles.

Definition

“**Personal information**” under PIPA means information about an identifiable individual. It includes employee personal information but does not include work contact information or work product information.

Policy

1. The [general meeting] will appoint [#] personal information protection officer[s] (PIP officer).
2. The board will:
 - provide the PIP officer with a job description outlining duties in relation to PIPA and its principles
 - ensure the PIP officer receives appropriate training
 - ensure the PIP officer fulfills their duties
 - co-operate fully with the PIP officer in the performance of the officer’s duties and in implementation of the policy.
3. The co-op shall only collect the personal information that it requires to ensure sound management of the co-op and to fulfil its obligations to its members, its contractual obligations, and any legal requirements.
4. The co-op shall use and share personal information only with the agreement of the individuals concerned, or as provided for in PIPA.
5. The co-op will store documents that contain personal information securely to prevent unauthorized use. The co-op will destroy personal information when the co-op no longer needs it.
6. Individuals will, on written request, have access to any personal information that the co-op has about them. The co-op will provide the information within 30 days, except where to do so would be in violation of PIPA. The co-op will correct any errors in personal information that the individual brings to its attention.

7. All directors will sign an ethical conduct agreement that includes a confidentiality section. Management staff and any designated members who have access to some personal information or co-op confidential information will also sign the agreement.
8. Discussion that will result in sensitive personal information appearing in the minutes will be held *in camera*. Minutes of the *in camera* portion of meetings will be kept separate from the regular minutes, and stored securely, to prevent unauthorized use

Policy approved: **[insert date]**

Replaces policy/policies: **[insert date]**

Resources – Personal Information

Options

Options: Point #1

- If your co-op wants the board to appoint the PIP officer[s], delete “general meeting” and add “board”.
- Your co-op could appoint more than one PIP officer. Insert the number of officers your co-op wants and change “officer” to “officers”.

Option: Point #2

If you chose more than one PIP officer in Point #1, change “officer” to “officers” and “officer’s” to “officers’”.

Discussion notes: What is personal information?

The Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) has a broad definition of personal information. It says it “means information about an identifiable individual...”

Examples of “personal information” could include:

- home address and phone number
- age, weight, height
- marital status, religion
- race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation
- medical information, including information about physical or mental disability
- income, documentation of income, bank information, credit rating
- criminal record
- social insurance number

In a housing co-op, a lot of information is required for the ordinary running of co-op business.

For example:

- members’ home addresses and phone numbers for internal co-op use, unless the member requests that an unlisted number not be included
- members’ parking spaces
- share refund details
- approval or denial of sublet requests
- approval of associate members

Some information is more sensitive than others and should be handled differently. Any sensitive information should be discussed in camera. If you are not sure if the information is sensitive or not, think about how you would feel if the information were about you and others had access to it. Consider what’s reasonable in the circumstances. And some information is related to the unit—not the person—so is not considered personal information.

Information about a member’s arrears to the co-op may be considered personal information. But arrears are a debt to the co-op and the co-op must have information about arrears in order to manage co-op finances effectively [section 15 [1] [j] of PIPA]. Each co-op will decide for themselves on the format for arrears reporting to the board. Some co-ops do not reveal the names of members in arrears to the board—unless the board has to decide on termination. When a director is in arrears it must be reported to the board—most co-op’s Rules cover directors in arrears.

A sample confidentiality agreement is attached. The complete set of PIPA Tools for Housing Co-ops is available in the member resources section at www.chf.bc.ca.

There are exceptions to this policy, as required by PIPA. For example, the government may require a co-op to release personal information about an individual. Be sure to check that the written notice your co-op receives has the proper authorization before releasing information. When in doubt, consult PIPA and ask for advice from the various resources listed in the PIPA tool #12 *Useful websites and contacts*.

CHF BC Sample – Confidentiality Agreement (remove header when adapting for use)

[Full name of housing co-op or letterhead]

Sample confidentiality agreement

(Management staff and any designated members with access to confidential information in the course of their duties. For directors, see the sample ethical conduct declaration which includes confidentiality.)

I will comply with policies and procedures adopted by the co-op in respect of the *Personal Information Protection Act* of British Columbia.

Confidential information is:

- financial information and personal information about members, applicants, former members, residents and employees of the co-op, and
- information about co-op business which should be kept private to protect the co-op.

I will not disclose any confidential information that I know through my position with the co-op unless authorized by the board of the co-op. This applies while I am a member or management staff of the co-op as well as after I leave the co-op.

Name

Date

Signature