



PRESS RELEASE

British Columbians' Views on Freedom of Information and Privacy

Vancouver BC, November 16, 2021 — These are the results of an online poll conducted on behalf of the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association (FIPA). The poll examines British Columbian public opinion with respect to freedom of information and privacy in BC.

Most British Columbians think they have access to the information that they need to trust government decisions.

Two-thirds (65%) of British Columbians agree that 'people have access to the information that they need to trust the decisions made by governments in British Columbia'. Three-in-ten (30%) disagree and 5% are undecided.

British Columbians oppose requiring people to pay a fee to file a FOI (Freedom of Information) request for information.

Three-in-five (61%) British Columbians say they oppose requiring people to pay a fee to file a FOI request for information. One-quarter (25%) support this idea and 13% are undecided.

British Columbians also oppose government bodies storing personal information outside of Canada.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of British Columbians say they oppose government bodies storing their personal information outside of Canada. One-in-five (19%) support this idea and 8% are undecided.

Allowing people to file FOI requests for records held by public bodies is important to most British Columbians.

Most British Columbians say it is important for 'a police department' (86%), 'a municipal government' (80%), 'the Office of the Premier' (77%), 'the Offices of the Legislative Assembly' (77%), and 'any corporation owned or controlled by a public body' (74%) to be subject to FOI requests.

Familiarity with privacy rights and protection is low.

Only one-third of British Columbians say they are familiar with 'BC's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act' (36%) and 'BC's Personal Information Protection Act' (33%). Even fewer say they are familiar with 'how to request access to my personal information and general information from public bodies' (28%), 'BC's Information and Privacy Commissioner' (27%), 'how to request access to my personal information from private bodies' (25%), and 'the process to file a complaint relating to the handling of my personal information' (23%).





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About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos online poll of 802 adult British Columbians conducted November 5-12, 2021 on behalf of the BC Freedom of Information and Privacy Association (FIPA). These data were statistically weighted by region, age, gender and education to ensure the sample composition reflects that of the actual BC population according to Census data. The precision of Ipsos polls containing online data is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the overall poll is accurate to within +/-3.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all adult BC residents been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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