



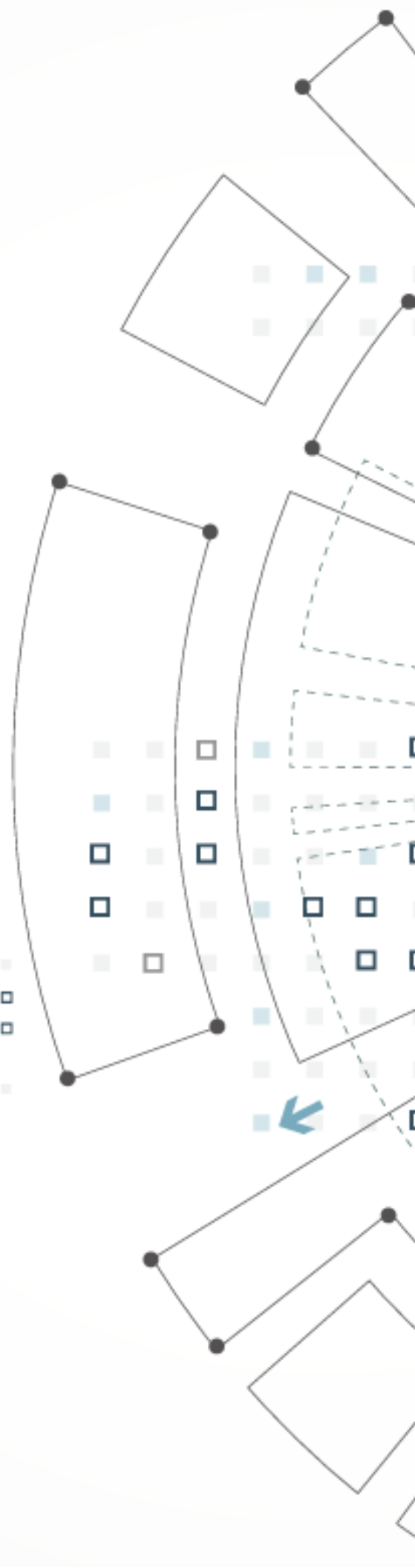
OFFICE OF THE
INFORMATION &
PRIVACY COMMISSIONER
for British Columbia

Protecting privacy. Promoting transparency.

TIP SHEET

REQUESTING RECORDS FROM A PUBLIC BODY OR PRIVATE ORGANIZATION

SEPTEMBER 2017



WHAT KINDS OF RECORDS CAN I REQUEST?

Two laws in BC set out what kinds of records you can access:

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)* gives you the right to request access to records held by "public bodies" including provincial government ministries, local governments, municipal police forces and crown corporations. You can request records that contain your own personal information, and records such as reports, audits, and financial information of the public body.

The *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)* gives you the right to request access to your own personal information in the custody or control of a private sector "organization" including corporations, non-profit societies and professional associations. Private organizations do not have to provide you with their operational, financial, or other company records.

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN REQUESTING RECORDS

1	If you want to request records from a public body or private organization in BC, the first step is to make your request in writing. Be as specific as possible. Deliver your request to the public body or organization and keep a copy for your records.
2	Note the date the public body or organization received your request. They have 30 business days to respond, but in some cases they may be able to take a time extension.
3	If you do not receive a response within 30 business days, you can contact our office and request a review of a public body or organization's failure to respond to your request.
4	If you receive a response within 30 days but you do not feel the public body or organization has responded appropriately, you have two options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you feel records are missing, you must first complain directly to the public body or organization and provide reasons why you believe there are additional records. If they are unable to resolve your complaint, you may then complain to our office. ▪ If you disagree with how the public body or organization has severed the records they provided to you, you may request a review by our office.
5	If you disagree with a time extension taken by a public body in relation to your request for records, and you are unable to resolve the matter with the public body, you may complain to our office. This is different than requesting a review.