

DATA RESIDENCY CHANGES

Background

Amendments to the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (FOIPPA) received royal assent on Nov. 25, 2021. As part of these changes, the B.C. government updated its data-residency provisions to help public bodies keep pace with new technology and provide the services people expect in a modern age.

Previously, the Act required that personal information be stored and accessed within Canada except under limited circumstances. Government has heard feedback from people, businesses, Indigenous groups, and organizations that they want to continue accessing government services, such as healthcare and educational opportunities, using the tools that have made their lives easier during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Overview

The 2021 amendments bring B.C. in line with other jurisdictions by removing restrictions that prevented public bodies from storing information outside of Canada.

To ensure personal information that people entrust to government continues to be protected, privacy impact assessment requirements for public bodies are being strengthened. These assessments consider risk on a case-by-case basis, based on the sensitivity of the information involved and where it is stored.

When sensitive personal information will be stored outside Canada, a supplementary assessment will be required. This additional assessment will consider factors that impact the risk of unauthorized collection, use, disclosure or storage of the personal information and risk responses that are commensurate to the risk posed.

An informed decision can then be made by the head of the public body on whether to proceed with the project.

More information

Additional information, including [guidance documentation](#), is available at <http://gov.bc.ca/FOIPPAUpdates> or contact the B.C. Privacy and Access Helpline at Privacy.Helpline@gov.bc.ca / 250-356-1851.

Information sessions are being held for ministries and the broader public sector. Check www.gov.bc.ca/privacytraining for updates.