



ACCESS AND PRIVACY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Freedom of Information?

The [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (MFIPPA, the Act) is a Provincial law that directs the City on access and privacy issues.

The Act has two goals:

1. to provide a right of access to information under the control of the City, subject to certain exemptions, and
2. to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information about themselves held by the City, including a right of access to that information.

Freedom of Information (FOI) or access to information are both terms that are used to describe requesting information from the City of Vaughan under MFIPPA.

How do I request information?

To access records held by the City, check with the department that holds the information. If the department is not able to provide the information, you may file a formal FOI request under MFIPPA.

To file a request, please complete the online [Access Request Form](#).

Please note: Depending on the type of request, fees may be charged for time spent searching and preparing records for disclosure. Please see "What will it cost?" below for more information.

The request must contain your personal contact information and a description of the information you are seeking. Please provide as much information as possible on the [Access Request Form](#) to allow for ease of search.

If the request is unclear, you will be contacted by staff in the Access and Privacy division for clarification.

If the request is for your own personal information and you have an agent acting on your behalf, you will need to provide a written authorization for your agent.

What will it cost?

Depending on the complexity of the request, fees may be charged for time spent searching and preparing records for disclosure, as well as costs for photocopies (should physical copies be requested).

Search and preparation time is charged at \$7.50 for every 15 minutes. No search and preparation fees are charged for requests for personal information. Photocopies are billed at \$0.20 a page.

If the fee to complete the request is estimated to be more than \$25, a fee estimate will be issued. If the estimated fee is more than \$100, a 50 per cent deposit may have to be deposited prior to the City undertaking a full search for the records.

Please note: At this time, the City does not have an electronic payment option for this process. Once your request has been completed and an access decision has been released, you will receive further details on how to provide payment.

How long will it take?

Except in extenuating circumstances, under the MFIPPA mandate you will receive a decision within 30 days.

In requests where the City needs to seek advice from an individual outside of the City regarding the release of information or if the request is for a large number of records, the time limit may be extended. You will be advised if this extension is required and you will have the opportunity to ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (IPC) to review the extension.

Will I get everything I ask for?

MFIPPA outlines certain information that is exempt from disclosure.

The types of records that may be exempt are:

- advice or recommendations of an officer, employee or consultant of the City
- information that is currently or will be available to the public within 90 days
- records relating to law enforcement records
- records subject to solicitor/client privilege
- third-party commercial or financial information
- any personal information of third parties

There are very few exemptions that apply if you are requesting your own personal information.

What if I do not agree with the City's decision?

If you disagree with the City's decision to your formal request, you have the option to appeal the decision to the IPC. Information on how to contact the IPC and the process for filing an appeal will be contained in your decision letter.

The IPC can be reached at:

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario

2 Bloor St. E., Suite 1400
Toronto, ON M4W 1A8
416-326-3333 or 1-800-387-0073

What is personal information?

Personal information is defined in the MFIPPA as "recorded information about an identifiable individual" and includes your home address, email address, telephone number, age, ethnic origin, education as well as medical or financial history.

How is personal information collected and used?

Any time you are asked to provide your personal information (i.e., fill out a form) you are entitled to be told:

- the reason the information is being collected;
- the title and contact information of a staff member of the City who can answer any questions you may have about the collection of the information, and;
- what the information will be used for.

The City maintains an online [personal information bank](#) which lists all personal information held by the City and provides details on where the information is held and what it is used for.

Who has access to my personal information?

City staff will collect, use and disclose personal information, if necessary, for City services. If staff need access to your personal information to do their duties, they will be permitted access to it.

Some personal information is collected by the City and is required to be available to the public. This may include information being available at City Hall or on the City's website. If you have concerns regarding any of your personal information being on the City's website, please review our [Public Record Redaction Procedure and Application](#).

What if I believe my personal information has been shared without my consent?

The City of Vaughan takes its responsibility for the privacy protection of personal information very seriously.

If you have a concern about the collection or use of personal information, please contact a senior staff person in the appropriate department to discuss this matter.

If you are not satisfied with the City's efforts to resolve the concern, contact the IPC at the address below:

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario

2 Bloor St. E., Suite 1400
Toronto, ON
M4W 1A8
416-326-3333 or 1-800-387-0073

Where can I get more information?

For questions about access and privacy at the City of Vaughan please email us: accessandprivacy@vaughan.ca.

We **do not** recommend you send personal information via email. Please contact us directly if you want to talk to us about an access or privacy issue.

Access and Privacy Office

905-832-2281, ext. 8987 or 8988