

Northwestern Health Unit Policies & Procedures		Number: BOH 2.05
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Title:	Privacy	

Approved by:	Board of Health	Approval Date:	Sept. 12/90
Revision Dates:	Jan. 17/14; Mar. 23/05, May 21/04		

PRIVACY

PURPOSE

The Northwestern Health Unit is committed to respecting privacy and protecting personal information.

The *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004 (PHIPA)*, governs the handling of all personal health information by the Northwestern Health Unit; the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)* governs all non-health related personal information and other records in the Health Unit's possession.

These two laws regulate how the Health Unit collects, uses, retains, discloses and disposes of personal information and other records.

This policy provides guidance regarding the collection and handling of personal information by the Northwestern Health Unit.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, Board of Health members and any others acting on behalf of the Health Unit.

POLICY

The Northwestern Health Unit collects personal information including personal health information essential to the operation of the Health Unit as authorized by the various Acts under which the Health Unit functions.

The contents of all records are the property of the Northwestern Health Unit and are accessible only to those persons whose responsibilities directly affect the maintenance and care of the records and to those individuals to whom the information pertains.

Forms used for the purposes of collecting the information shall state the legal authority for collecting the information, its intended purpose and shall indicate who can answer questions about the collection. In instances where the information is collected verbally, the Health Unit employee collecting the information is responsible for providing a verbal notice of collection.

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The Northwestern Health Unit provides access to certain records and personal information under its custody or control pursuant to the conditions of (M)FIPPA and PHIPA when:

- (1) the information would not normally be released; or
- (2) the individual specifically indicates the information is being requested under (M)FIPPA or PHIPA.

Employees shall not confirm or deny that a record exists or the identity of a client, should an external person request confirmation of a record or client name (information may be used /shared internally as needed). Access to records must be formally requested in writing.

These records are indexed in the Freedom of Information Directory and are securely retained for specific time periods and destroyed in a secure manner.

Approved / Revised:

On behalf of the Board of Health

original signature on file

Chair, Board of Health

original signature on file

Chief Executive Officer