

# MUNICIPAL PRIVACY BULLETIN

## Privacy Breaches

A privacy breach is the result of an unauthorized access to, or collection, use or disclosure of personal information. Personal information is defined in the *ATIPPA, 2015*. It includes name, address, telephone number, age, educational or employment history, financial information, identifying number such as social insurance number or mcp number, information about criminal history, health status or history and much more.

Under *ATIPPA, 2015* (effective June 1, 2015) all towns and cities in Newfoundland and Labrador now have to report all privacy breaches to the OIPC. It is the responsibility of the municipal ATIPP Coordinator (often the town clerk or town manager) to contact the OIPC once a breach is identified. Since mandatory reporting has become law the OIPC has only received 1 privacy breach notification from municipalities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Failure to report a privacy breach is a violation of the Act.

Below are a few examples of real privacy breaches which could occur in towns and cities. If you believe that you may have had a privacy breach and have not yet reported it please get in touch with the OIPC. If you have any questions regarding privacy breaches such as what is a privacy breach, is what happened a breach, how do I report a breach, what do I do once a breach has been identified or others please contact the OIPC.

Breach reports can be submitted via email by using the OIPC reporting form found on our website ([www.oipc.nl.ca](http://www.oipc.nl.ca)) to [breachreport@oipc.nl.ca](mailto:breachreport@oipc.nl.ca). We are here to help.



### Contact Information

Office of the Information  
and Privacy Commissioner  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 2 Canada Drive  
Sir Brian Dunfield Building  
P.O. Box 13004, Station A  
St. John's, NL A1B 3V8  
Tel: (709) 729-6309  
Fax: (709) 729-6500  
Toll Free in  
Newfoundland  
and Labrador:  
1-877-729-6309  
E-mail:  
[commissioner@oipc.nl.ca](mailto:commissioner@oipc.nl.ca)  
[www.oipc.nl.ca](http://www.oipc.nl.ca)

### Privacy Breach Examples

Joan is a town clerk in the Town of Dokken. The town council has decided to write all residents in the town with overdue tax bills outlining what is owing and suggesting monthly payment arrangements. During the mail out Joan accidentally mixes up two letters and sends Bob Smith's tax bill to Bob Smyth and vice versa. This is a privacy breach. This type of breach can also occur by sending a fax to the wrong number or an email to the wrong address.

The Town of Rockford recently concluded work on the renovation of its town hall. Mayor Butler is preparing the records of employment for the people who worked on the project. He decides to take this work home with him to complete on the weekend, however he leaves his briefcase in the car with the employee's personal information in it. The car is broken into and the briefcase is stolen. This is a privacy breach.

Darren is a town manager with the small town of Cap Island which has no town office so he works from home using his own laptop and email account. Darren keeps all the town files including the personal information of residents on the laptop which his son also sometimes uses for school work. Darren's son is using the computer and decides to look up the unlisted phone number for a new student he likes who recently moved into the town. This is a privacy breach.