
ROUTINE ACCESS POLICY

Nova Scotia Department of Education

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Government of Nova Scotia seeks to provide to the public greater access to designated records. The Nova Scotia Department of Education's Routine Access Policy is designed to provide improved access to designated records held by the Department.

Records obtained through the Routine Access Policy do not require an application under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The Department of Education's Routine Access Policy was developed in accordance with Nova Scotia Department of Justice document, "Routine Access Policy Development Guidelines for Nova Scotia Government 'Public Bodies'", and is administered in accordance with the following principles:

Personal Privacy

The policy shall be applied in a manner which will be considerate and protective of the personal privacy of individuals. Records subject to this policy shall be considered for release and severing in a manner consistent with the provisions of the *FOIPOP Act*.

Timeliness

The Department of Education will respond to requests made under the Routine Access Policy in a reasonable and timely fashion.

Cost Recovery

Fees for the reproduction and provision of records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations or statutes.

Transparency

This policy shall be made readily available to the public.

Reasonableness

This policy shall apply to requests for reasonable quantities of records.

2. DEFINITIONS

“Active dissemination” is the periodic and proactive release of information or records in the absence of a request using mechanisms such as the Internet, libraries, press releases, etc. See Appendix B for a selective list of records which are actively disseminated by the Department.

“FOIPOP access” is the release of a record in response to an application made under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

“Office of Primary Responsibility” (OPR) is the office designated the official custodian of the master record of a document. This office is responsible for the retention and disposition of the record. A division originating a record is deemed to be the Office of Primary Responsibility for those records.

“Records” are, “books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other media on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records”. (Clause 3(1) (k) of the *FOIPOP Act*)

“Routine Access” is the routine or automatic release, in full or in part, of certain types of administrative or operational records as a matter of course in response to a request, without the need for a formal application for records under the *FOIPOP Act*.

“Routine Access Requests” are requests made by the public for records held by the Department of Education which are processed in accordance with this policy.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Routine Access Policy is to make routinely accessible certain designated records from an approved list of records. Access may be provided to these records without the requirement of filing a request under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The policy will provide a greater certainty of access for those requesting information, and reflects the spirit of openness and accountability of the *FOIPOP Act*.

4. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Department of Education staff and all records listed in the attached Schedule A.

This policy shall apply to requests for reasonable quantities of records and shall not apply to a request for more than 50 pages of records in a particular category and/or time period. Repetitive requests by an individual for significant volumes of records, or the separation of a request into several small requests totalling a large volume, shall not be subject to the policy. The application of the Routine Access policy shall not unduly interfere with the day-to-day operations of the Department.

This policy shall not apply to information that would be subject to the exemptions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Personal information in records released under Routine Access may be severed according to the same criteria and in the same manner as requests made under the FOIPOP Act.

5. POLICY DIRECTIVES

The Manager, Information Management Division will coordinate the administration of this policy including maintaining information about records disclosed under the Routine Access Policy.

The policy will be posted on the Department's web site.

Staff of the Department will be provided information on the application of this policy.

6. POLICY GUIDELINES

All Routine Access requests must be made in writing. Requests may be submitted by mail, e-mail or fax, and should be sent directly to the Manager, Information Management Division.

The Manager, Information Management Division will review and respond to all Routine Access requests in the context of this policy.

A record requested under the Routine Access Policy will be reviewed to determine if the records are listed in Schedule A.

Fees for the reproduction and provision of records will be charged at the rate of 20 cents per page.

Personal information about an identifiable individual will be severed from the record prior to disclosure.

If the Routine Access Policy does not apply to the request, a response will be provided promptly to the requester, and shall advise what other avenues may be available to obtain the information (e.g.,

FOIPOP application).

All records accessed through this policy should be provided to the applicant within a reasonable period of time, such as 30 calendar days from receipt of the request.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Deputy Minister of the Department of Education shall be accountable for the implementation of this policy.

8. COMPLIANCE

The Manager, Information Management Division of the Department of Education shall be responsible for ensuring the tracking and compliance with this policy. The policy will be subject to audit by the Nova Scotia Government Internal Audit Unit.

9. EVALUATION

The "Routine Access" Program established under this policy shall be evaluated or reviewed on an annual basis by the Manager, Information Management Division.

10. REFERENCES

Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, S.N.S. 1993, c. 5, s. 1.

11. INQUIRIES

All inquiries shall be directed to:

Manager, Information Management Division
Nova Scotia Department of Education
2021 Brunswick Street
P.O. Box 578
Halifax, NS B3J 2S9
Telephone: 424-5295
Fax: 424-0519
E-mail: RAE@gov.ns.ca

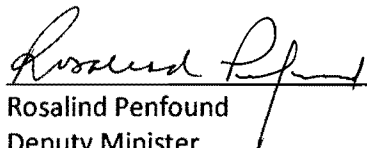
12. APPENDICES

Schedule A: Routine Access Records
Schedule B: Active Dissemination Record

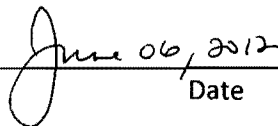
13. DATE EFFECTIVE

This Policy shall be in effect on June 15, 2012.

Approved by:



Rosalind Penfound
Deputy Minister
Department of Education



Date

SCHEDULE A: ROUTINE ACCESS RECORDS

The following types of records are available under the Routine Access Policy. Each request is reviewed individually. This policy shall not apply to information that would be subject to the exemptions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Human Resources

General:

- Current organizational charts with position titles
- Generic information about current benefits and hours of work
- Current job descriptions, pay scale, classification of positions (unionized, excluded)
- Current secondment agreements both within and outside government, excluding personal information
- Current personal service contracts of individuals not appointed pursuant to the *Civil Service Act*, excluding personal information and service/ product trade secrets

Selection and hiring process for competitions held in past 12 months:

- Number of applicants for position
- Number of persons interviewed
- Screening criteria contained in job posting
- Identity of selection panel to those individuals being interviewed
- Name of successful candidate, once offer of employment has been accepted

Finance

- Individual Statement of Expense (summary sheet) for a three month period within the current fiscal year and for a maximum of three individuals in one Department at any one time (no receipts)
- Cost of government office renovations carried out within the previous six months
- Cost of sending a delegation out of the province or out of the country (current fiscal year)
- Overtime expenditures (current year-to-date) for specific Departments or divisions
- Detailed expenditure reports, by category, (e.g., salaries, travel, etc.), or by Division, for a maximum of three per current fiscal year (e.g., Cost Element Group)
- Ministerial monthly expense summary provided to Executive Council office (current fiscal year)
- Program audit reports that have been released by the Auditor General
- Profile sheets on school board funding, after budget approval
- Audited Financial Statements for School Boards, most recent completed fiscal year
- Final program audits by the Nova Scotia Government Corporate Internal Audit Division

Facilities Planning

- Community Use of School Agreements
- School Facilities Design Requirements Manual, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Document DC 350
- List of major capital project requests received in response to the Department's call for submission
- List of approved major capital projects

General

- Various types of reports, for example, guidelines, and procedures related to Special Education, guidance and counselling, and English as an Additional Language
- Research and statistics related to student services, e.g. Tuition Support Program statistics
- School demographic information (e.g., number of teachers, student enrollment by grade in a school, etc.)
- Records Management Policy and Plan

SCHEDULE B: ACTIVE DISSEMINATION RECORDS

The following list of actively disseminated records indicates the type of records routinely released by the Department of Education. Most of these records are available on the Department of Education Web site, www.ednet.ns.ca

Departmental information

- Overview and structure of Department, including Statement of Mandate, business plan, etc.
- Information on all programs available to the public
- Department contacts – phone, fax, email, mailing addresses
- Information about divisions of the Department of Education and the services and programs provided
- Links to news releases
- List of Authorized Learning Resources
- List of documents produced by the Department

Reports and Research Papers

Kids and Learning First, Cyberbullying Report, Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) Report, Reality Check, etc.

Directories

Authorized Learning Resources for Nova Scotia Schools, Directory of Schools in Nova Scotia, etc.

Legislation and Regulations

Links to relevant legislation, such as Education Act, Ministerial Education Act Regulations

Terms of Reference

e.g., Youth Advisory Council