



File: 292-30/HTH-2021-12205

July 6, 2021

Sent via email:

**Re: Request for Access to Records**  
***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA)***

I am writing further to your request received by the Ministry of Health. Your request is for:

*Provide documentation on the number of cancelled or postponed surgeries and health procedures due to COVID-19, and any briefing notes on this issue provided to the Minister's office (Date Range for Record Search: From 3/1/2020 To 5/10/2021)*

Some information has been withheld pursuant to section 13 (Policy advice or recommendations) of FOIPPA. A complete copy of FOIPPA is available online at:

[http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165\\_00](http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165_00)

Your file is now closed.

Additional records responsive to your request are available publically at the following links:

*\*Key dates related to the first cohort of postponed surgeries:*

- 2020-03-16: British Columbia's health authorities were directed to immediately move all hospitals in the province to Outbreak Response Phase 2 in response to COVID-19. This meant hospitals would undertake only urgent and emergency procedures and postpone all non-urgent scheduled surgeries. Hospitals were to review operating-room capacity daily to prioritize urgent and emergency cases. Lions Gate Hospital in the Vancouver Coastal Health region was directed to move to Outbreak Response Phase 3. This meant the hospital would accept only emergency patients.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0086-000499>

.../2

- 2020-05-18: Surgical services restart:  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0026-000830>
- 2020-07-21: **B.C. fulfilling Surgical Renewal Commitment:**  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0228-001337> (First public report)
- 2020-09-01: **B.C. progresses on surgical renewal plan:**  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0049-001627> (Second public report)
- 2021-01-06: **Adding surgeries for patients: Catching up from COVID-19:**  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021HLTH0003-000011> (Third, fourth, fifth and sixth public reports)
- 2021-03-19: **B.C. continues to advance surgical renewal achievement:**  
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021HLTH0055-000513> (Seventh, eighth and ninth public reports)

The records located in response to your request will be delivered through the BC Secure File Transfer Service. Separate emails will follow from the BC SFT Notification Service directing you how to set up an account and where to obtain your records. A guide for using the SFTS is enclosed for your convenience.

These records will be published on the BC Government's Open Information website a minimum of ten business days after release. To find out more about Open Information, please access the Open Information website at: [www.gov.bc.ca/openinformation](http://www.gov.bc.ca/openinformation)

If you have any questions regarding your request, please contact Samara Fisher, the analyst assigned to your request, at 250 953-3622. This number can be reached toll-free by calling from Vancouver, 604 660-2421, or from elsewhere in BC, 1 800 663-7867 and asking to be transferred to 250 953-3622.

You have the right to ask the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review this decision. I have enclosed information on the review and complaint process.

Sincerely,



Samara Fisher, Senior FOI Analyst  
On behalf of Darlene Kotchonoski, A/Manager  
Justice/Health Team, Information Access Operations

Enclosures

## BC Government Secure File Transfer Service

### Information Access Operations Ad-Hoc User Guide

#### **Returning Users**

If you are a returning user, please use your existing username and password. Passwords expire after 90 days. You can update your password at anytime.

#### **New Users**

Your records are provided to you via the Secure File Transfer Service (SFTS). You will need to setup a User Account to access to the STFS site.

You must log in to your temporary SFTS account within 7 days. After 7 days, your temporary SFTS account will expire and will no longer be accessible. If you are no longer able to access your account or records, please contact the FOI Analyst identified in your Response Letter for assistance.

#### **Email Communication**

1. The first email has your Response Letter attached.
  - This email is from the FOI Analyst at Information Access Operations who processed your file.
  - If your records are password protected, the response letter will contain your **password to open your records**.
2. The second email is the *New Package is Waiting* notification email.
  - This email will be received at the same time as the third email.
  - A hyperlink to the SFTS is contained in this email.
3. The third email is the *New User Account for the BC Secure File Transfer Service*
  - This email is sent only to users who are required to setup a STFS User Account.
  - If you are an existing user and your account is still active, you will not receive this email.
  - This email contains the following:
    - a **Hyperlink** to the SFTS site
    - a **Username** to access the SFTS site
    - a **temporary Password** to access the SFTS site
  - If you are unable to locate this email, please check your junk/spam folder. It is from BC Secure File Transfer Notification Service <DONOTREPLY>@gov.bc.ca.

#### **Accessing Your Records**

1. Setup your SFTS account.
  - Click on the URL hyperlink provided in your third email.
  - You will be redirected to the SFTS site.

- If you are not redirected to SFTS site, it is accessible at: [filetransfer.gov.bc.ca](http://filetransfer.gov.bc.ca).
- 2. Enter your *Username* and *Password*.
  - These are provided in your third email.
- 3. Change your SFTS account password.
  - You will be required to do this as soon as you login.
  - Follow the instructions provided to you after you login to SFTS for the first time.
  - After you change your password, select "Finish." This will redirect you to your STFS Inbox.
- 4. Your records are now accessible.
  - Records will be available in SFTS for 35 days.
  - You can download your records up to 5 times.
  - To download your records:
    - Click on the records package
    - Click on the *Download* button beside the file(s)
  - If your records are password protected, you will require a password to open the pdf document.
    - *The password to open the pdf is located in your first email's Response Letter.*
  - It is recommended that you download and save your records so you do not have to return to the SFTS each time to view.
- 5. If your records are password protected, please consult your .pdf software's user manual on how to remove the password/encryption.

### **Troubleshooting**

- If the hyperlink to the SFTS site does not open, try to access the site on a different web browser such as Chrome, or Firefox or Safari.
- Your temporary SFTS account expires after 7 days unless the account is logged into again or receives a new package. Your account will be deleted 7 days after it has been marked as expired. Once it is deleted, you will need to have a new ad-hoc account created - contact the FOI Analyst identified in the response letter.
- If you have forgotten your password but your account is still active:
  - You can use the "Request a password change" link on the Login page.
  - An email will be sent to you providing you the URL to confirm the password change.
  - Passwords expire after 90 days.
- If you encounter technical issues, please call the technical support line at 250-387-7000 and select option 3. You will need to advise the representative that you are requesting assistance as an ad-hoc user of the BC Secure File Transfer Service.

<p>How to Request a Review with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner</p>
--

If you have any questions regarding your request please contact the analyst assigned to your file. The analyst's name and telephone number are listed in the attached letter.

Pursuant to section 52 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA), you may ask the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to review any decision, act, or failure to act with regard to your request under FOIPPA.

**Please note that you have 30 business days to file your review with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. In order to request a review please write to:**

Information and Privacy Commissioner  
PO Box 9038 Stn Prov Govt  
4th Floor, 947 Fort Street  
Victoria BC V8W 9A4  
Telephone 250 387-5629      Fax 250 387-1696

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's Office with:

1. A copy of your original request;
2. A copy of our response; and
3. The reasons or grounds upon which you are requesting the review.