



Heenan Blaikie

PRACTICE OVERVIEW

Access to Information Law

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Vancouver

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Calgary

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Related Industries

Government & Public Institutions

Related Practices

Privacy & Information Management
AccessPrivacy^{HB}

Related Links

heenanblaikie.com
accessprivacy.ca

ACCESS TO INFORMATION LAW

Access to information legislation applies to an increasing number of entities within the public and broader public sectors, including federal and provincial governments and municipalities and their agencies, regulatory authorities, the education sector, police services, utilities, health boards, transportation authorities, and many others.

Access to information laws also affect private sector organizations whose records are held by institutions covered by the legislation. For example, corporations often provide commercially sensitive information to public institutions through the procurement process, and these records may be exposed to disclosure under access to information legislation unless they are expressly exempt or excluded from the legislation. As well, individuals may have a right of access to their own personal information or personal health information held by private sector or other entities governed by provincial or federal privacy legislation.

The Heenan Blaikie LLP Access to Information Law practice regularly advises clients on a broad range of regulatory matters including privacy complaints and access to information requests and appeals. Members of our team have represented clients across Canada, before federal and provincial regulators as well as before the courts. Our skills enable clients to navigate federal and provincial access to information and privacy laws while maintaining stakeholder trust.

WHO WE ARE

The Heenan Blaikie LLP Access to Information Law practice includes senior lawyers with extensive subject matter expertise in access to information and privacy law.

- Priscilla Platt is a leading authority on access to information and privacy law. Priscilla joined Heenan Blaikie LLP in 2006 after more than twenty years of senior level experience in access and privacy law with the Ontario government. Priscilla was instrumental in establishing the Canadian and Ontario Bar Associations' Privacy Law Sections and has served as Chair of both. She has been an adjunct professor of Information Law at the University of Toronto Law School. In June 2006, Priscilla was awarded the Ontario Bar Association's first Karen Spector Award for Excellence in Privacy Law.
- Adam Kardash, a partner with Heenan Blaikie LLP, focuses his practice almost exclusively on privacy law. He is head of the Heenan Blaikie LLP Privacy and Information Management practice and Managing Director and Head of AccessPrivacy^{HB}.

For further information about our Access to Information Practice, please contact:

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Adam Kardash

Partner & Head, Privacy & Information Management Practice and
Managing Director & Head, AccessPrivacy^{HB}

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OUR CLIENTS

We represent a diverse group of clients, including public and broader public sector institutions and regulatory authorities such as:

- Government, including federal, provincial, municipal and any related agencies
- Education, including universities, colleges and school boards
- Healthcare, including hospitals and health boards
- Police services
- Transportation, including transit commissions
- Utilities
- Entities that do business with any of the above.

Our clients can count on the Heenan Blaikie LLP Access to Information Law team to provide high-quality legal services solutions to meet their complete access to information policy and governance needs.

OFFERING PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

Drawing on our extensive experience, we:

- advise clients on compliance with all Canadian federal and provincial access to information and privacy laws, including the federal *Access to Information Act* and *Privacy Act* and Ontario's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and its municipal counterpart, MFIPPA
- help clients process and respond to access requests
- represent clients in matters before federal and provincial regulators as well as before the courts in judicial reviews
- provide access to information and privacy training and awareness programs
- advise clients on access to information compliance, policy and governance issues.

Priscilla and Adam co-authored and launched the Heenan Blaikie LLP electronic guide to Ontario's public sector access and privacy legislation in April 2007. The Public Sector Source (formerly known as AccessPrivacy.ca) is an innovative tool to assist institutions and the public to understand legal developments in these areas. AccessPrivacy.ca provides valuable and current information on:

- which records are covered and which are excluded
- decisions on processing access requests
- how exemptions are interpreted, including detailed explanations of the solicitor-client, advice and recommendations, and third-party exemptions
- the appeal and complaint process
- the ins and outs of judicial reviews.