

# ROUTINE ACCESS POLICY

## DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

This Department of Finance Routine Access Policy is designed to provide persons with an opportunity to obtain certain categories of records without having to submit an application pursuant to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the “*FOIPOP Act*”). It shall be administered in accordance with the following principles:

#### a) **Personal Privacy**

The Department of Finance Routine Access Policy shall be applied in a manner which will be considerate and protective of the personal privacy of individuals and records subject to this Policy shall be considered for release and severed in a manner consistent with the *FOIPOP Act*.

#### b) **Timeliness**

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

#### c) **Cost Recovery**

Fees for the reproduction and provision of Records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations, or statutes. Examples include photocopying charges at \$.20 (twenty cents) per page and actual mailing costs.

#### d) **Transparency**

This Policy shall be made readily available to the public.

#### e) **Reasonableness**

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

### 2. DEFINITIONS

“**Active Dissemination**” means the periodic and proactive release of information or records in the absence of a request using mechanisms such as the Internet, libraries, etc. Please refer to [Schedule B](#) to this policy for information actively disseminated through the department of Finance’s Internet site and the On-Line Government Book Store.

“**Division**” means a Division in the Department of Finance.

**“FOIPOP Access”** means the release of a Record in response to a formal application made under the *FOIPOP Act*. To request information that falls outside this Routine Access Policy, please refer to the FOIPOP Application procedures at [http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/IAP/AI\\_about.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/IAP/AI_about.asp).

**“Policy”** means this Department of Finance Routine Access Policy.

**“Record or records”** means books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing 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.

**“Routine Access”** means 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*. Please refer to [Schedule A](#) to this policy for information that may be released (in full or in part) as per this policy.

### 3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- The objective of the implementation of this Policy is the accessibility of certain records routinely without additional administrative time being required of staff to fulfill Routine Access requests.
- The policy will provide a greater certainty of access for those requesting information, and reflect the spirit of openness and accountability of the *FOIPOP Act*.

### 4. APPLICATION

- This Policy **shall apply only 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 totaling a large volume, shall not be subject to this Policy.
- It is important to ensure that the application of this Policy not unduly interfere with the day-to-day operations of the Department of Finance.
- Requests made under this Policy do not apply to information subject to

exemptions under the *FOIPOP Act* or to information which is otherwise prohibited from being disclosed pursuant to any other statute or common law duty of confidentiality.

- Routine Access requests only apply to information created after October 23, 2003.
- Personal information shall be severed with the same criteria and in the same manner as requests made under the *FOIPOP Act*.

## **5. POLICY DIRECTIVES**

- Records available under the Department of Finance Routine Access Policy are indicated by Division in the attached [Schedule A](#), as well as [Schedule B](#) which lists website addresses for information that is actively disseminated by or for the Department of Finance through the Department of Finance Internet site or the On-Line Government Book Store.
- This Policy will be posted on the Department of Finance Website and all staff in the Department will be advised of this Policy coming into force.
- Requests under this Policy will be forwarded to the Department of Finance's Information Access and Privacy (IAP) Administrator by e-mail at [dofrouacc@gov.ns.ca](mailto:dofrouacc@gov.ns.ca) or by regular mail PO Box 187, Halifax, NS, B3J 1V9.
- A tracking system will be kept for compliance and auditing purposes.

## **6. POLICY GUIDELINES**

- All routine access requests should be made in writing.
- Once a request for Routine Access to a particular Record, or set of Records, has been received, it shall be forwarded to the IAP Administrator, Angela Smith, who shall review the request and determine if the Records are within the schedule of those designated (see Inquiries section 11).
- If this Policy does not apply to the request, a response to the applicant shall be provided promptly and shall indicate what other avenues may be available to obtain the information (e.g. FOIPOP application).
- If this Policy applies to the request, the records shall be provided to the applicant within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 30 days from receipt of the request.

- Individuals who apply under the *FOIPOP Act* for records available under this Policy will have their application fees returned and the records provided.

## **7. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The Deputy Minister of the Department of Finance shall be accountable for the implementation of this Policy.

The IAP Administrator is responsible for processing requests for information according to this policy and the annual review of the policy and schedules A and B.

Employees are responsible for following the Policy directives, guidelines and procedures and for forwarding requests made under this policy and the responsive records (if any) to the IAP Administrator for processing.

## **8. COMPLIANCE**

The Deputy Minister of the Department of Finance shall be responsible for ensuring the compliance with this Policy.

## **9. EVALUATION**

The Routine Access Program established under this Policy shall be evaluated on an annual basis by the IAP Administrator.

## **10. REFERENCES**

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

## **11. INQUIRIES**

IAP Administrator, [dofrouacc@gov.ns.ca](mailto:dofrouacc@gov.ns.ca) or by mail at PO Box 187, Halifax NS B3J 2N3.

## 12. **APPENDICES**

[Schedule A](#): Records to be released under Routine Access Policy

[Schedule B](#): Records and information actively disseminated through the Department of Finance's Internet Site, at the On-line On-Line Government Book Store, or through Department staff).

Dated: March 31, 2011

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/en/home/aboutfinance/informationaccessprivacy.aspx>