

# Privacy Ethics

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There is a fundamental ethical obligation to carefully protect the personal health information that is given to Hamilton Health Sciences and its agents in the course of providing or assisting in the provision of care to our patients. The Privacy Office supports and assists the staff, physicians, patients and families at HHS, to ensure the protection of the personal health information of our patients, and the employment data or personal information of our staff.

## When should I contact the Privacy Office?

Some typical privacy questions include:

- Can a patient/SDM request to access, correct or restrict access to personal health information?
- Is it acceptable to disclose personal health information to someone not providing care or for a purpose that is not related to providing patient care?
- What do I do if I have lost a patient's personal health information (i.e. made a privacy breach)?
- Who can gain access to HHS business records?

## How will the Privacy Office help?

The Privacy Office was established to be a resource for privacy issues and to:

1. Facilitate compliance of HHS and the governing board with legal requirements as identified in the Personal Health Information Protection Act of Ontario.
2. Respond to inquiries or complaints from the public about HHS information practices.
3. Respond to inquiries from staff about HHS information practices with respect to employment information.
4. Respond to client's requests for access to or correction of health information that is under the ownership of HHS.
5. Ensure that all agents of HHS are informed of their duties under the Personal Health Information Protection Act of Ontario through education and capacity-building.

## How do I contact the Privacy Office team members?

Details regarding Privacy and Freedom of Information, HHS policy and procedures, answers to Frequently Asked Questions and education resources, are available via the HHS Intranet site:

<http://corpweb/body.cfm?id=110> or the Internet site:  
<http://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/body.cfm?id=1759>

The Privacy Office can be reached by calling our main line at **905-521-2100 extension 75122** from Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm or via email at [privacy@hhsc.ca](mailto:privacy@hhsc.ca).

*Note: Please do not email personal health information from external email addresses.*