

The College of Opticians of Alberta (COA) is committed to protecting the privacy of members of the optical profession and members of the public. The COA will fulfill its requirements to comply with the Alberta Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) through our Privacy Policy and Procedures. The COA's commitment to privacy protection is implemented through the management of the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal information that the COA has for individual members of the public and members of the profession.

Privacy Officer

The Privacy Officer is Belinda Swann:

College of Opticians of Alberta
201, 2528 Ellwood Dr SW
Edmonton, Alberta
T6X 0A9
1(800)263-6026 or (780) 429-2694
bswann@opticians.ab.ca

Data Collection

The COA collects personal information from its members for the following purposes

Opticians

- creating and maintaining records about applications for and obtaining registration as a member;
- creating and maintaining records about applications for and obtaining a practice permit and for
 - keeping records about suspended cancelled or reinstated practice permits;
- creating and maintaining records about members fulfilling their continuing education or continuing
 - competency requirements;
- to manage student supervision
- to provide seminars and educational activities
- to maintain errors and omission liability insurance status
- to confirm good standing from other jurisdictions
- to answer inquiries from the public regarding the public register
- to provide information on upcoming event scheduling
- to facilitate annual conventions and AGM registrations
- to meet other legal and regulatory requirements.

Public

The COA collects personal information from the public for the following purposes

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- lodging, investigating and conducting hearings and appeals concerning complaints against members

Consent

Whenever possible, the COA obtains express consent for the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal information. For a number of the requirements under the Health Professions Act the COA assumes implied consent for personal information necessarily collected in registration, continuing competence, complaints management and accreditation programs, by members who provide the requested information. The COA could from time to time collect, use, disclose or retain personal information without consent, as permitted or required by law. The COA makes the membership list available to carefully screened parties whose products and services may be of interest to COA members.

Limited Use

The COA will only use personal information for the purposes declared upon collection.

Disclosure

The COA could exchange personal information on individuals with a number of groups, which includes but is not limited to the following:

- Advertising Groups
- Alberta Blue Cross
- Alberta Human Resources and Employment
- Alberta Health and Wellness
- Opticians Association of Canada (OAC)
- National Association of Opticianry Regulators (NACOR)
- Contractors to COA (e.g. software contractors, consultants, advisors)
- Optical Industry Suppliers
- Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)
- Health Canada
- National Accreditation Committee of Opticians (NACO)
- Provincial Optical Associations
- Provincial Optical Regulatory Agencies
- Workers Compensation Board of Alberta
- Insurance companies

The COA enters into Privacy Protection Agreements with such third parties in order to ensure personal information protection.

Retention

The COA keeps registration files of regulated members indefinitely. Other personal information of the public and members is kept for legislatively designated time periods.

Safeguarding Personal Information

Personal information is held in records that are out-of-sight and not available to unauthorized persons at the COA. Firewalls and passwords are used for the safeguarding of electronic information. Upon destruction, paper files are shredded, electronic records are deleted, and hard drives are emptied in the disposal of computer equipment.

Access to Personal Information

The COA is committed to maintaining accurate and current records and will from time-to-time update personal information with the public or members.

Members of the public and the profession who want to see their personal information can request access through the COA Privacy Officer. Requests to change personal information or to correct a file (other than routine updating) can be made through the Privacy Officer.

If a copy is requested, the COA will provide an estimate of the copying cost before copying the file.

Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

The COA will monitor and revise the COA Privacy Policy and Procedures on an ongoing basis.