

If you want to talk about anything you've read in this pamphlet or if you believe your rights are not being respected, please do one of the following:

- ◆ Talk to your PLEA worker or Program Manager.
- ◆ Phone Steve Quinlan at: 604-708-2622 or send him an e-mail at: complaints@plea.bc.ca.

“Through unique services tailored to individual strengths and needs, PLEA helps children, youth, adults and families who face significant challenges to lead fulfilling lives within their communities.”

All services accredited by



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PLEA Community Services Society of BC

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Protecting the Privacy of Your Personal Information



PLEA values the trust of those we work with. We recognize that maintaining that trust means that we must carefully protect the privacy of your personal information.

How does PLEA protect the privacy of my personal information?

We will need certain personal information from you in order to provide you with services. You have the right to know exactly what kind of information we will need, how we will use it and in what situations it will be disclosed*.

- ◆ In every case, clients must provide their informed consent before any personal information is collected from them.

PLEA is committed to only collecting the personal information that is necessary to ensure that we provide you with a high standard of service. The amount and type of personal information we require depends on the services you are accessing.

**Disclosure means that someone shows, sends or gives your personal information to someone else outside the organization, including another organization, ministry, or individual.*

- ◆ Your worker will make sure that you have a good understanding of your rights to privacy and our policies before you provide your consent.

It is very important to us that you know exactly what you are agreeing to. Please do not hesitate to raise any concerns you have with your PLEA worker as soon as possible. You may involve an advocate if you wish to.

- ◆ We will only use or disclose personal information where necessary to fulfill the purposes we identified when you provided your consent.
- ◆ We may use non-identifying personal information collected in our programs for research purposes.
- ◆ We will not use or disclose your personal information for any additional purpose unless we obtain your consent to do so, or we are legally required to.
- ◆ We also protect all the personal information we collect by maintaining reasonable security safeguards to prevent unauthorized access, use, disclosure, loss or modification.

Under what circumstances will PLEA disclose my personal information to others, without my consent?

Our obligation to protect the confidentiality of your personal information does not apply when disclosure is necessary to prevent serious, foreseeable and imminent harm to you, or to other individuals.

All PLEA personnel have a duty to report any information they receive as soon as possible when they suspect that someone is being harmed in any way, someone may harm themselves or someone may harm others. This means that if we have reason to believe that your actions or intentions pose a risk to your life, health or security or that of others we must report it immediately.

We are also obligated to disclose your personal information to others without your consent when laws, regulations or contractual obligations require us to.

This means that if you tell us that you have been involved in a serious crime we may be required to report it.

In all other cases, your personal information will only be disclosed to others when we have your consent to

do so. You have the right to know whom we are giving your information to and why.

How can I see the personal information PLEA has about me?

PLEA respects your rights to read the records and reports about you that we have created, request corrections and submit your own statements into your case records. When you want to see the personal information we have about you, the first step is to make the request to your PLEA worker. Our policy is that all workers are required to review these requests with their supervisors before they provide access. This is an important step because there are specific rules that we are legally required to follow**.

- ◆ We cannot let you read information that your ministry worker has provided to us without your worker's written permission.
- ◆ We cannot let you read any personal information that is about other individuals without their informed consent.
- ◆ We cannot disclose any information if we believe it will lead to harm to individual or public safety, including the individual who made the request.

Your PLEA worker is responsible for making arrangements with you to read the reports and/or records that we have created. If there is any information that we cannot let you read, your worker will discuss this with you. If you are not satisfied with our response to your request, you have the right to make a complaint to Steve Quinlan, our Privacy Officer.

How can I correct errors or omissions in my personal information?

We make every reasonable effort to make sure that the personal information we have about you is correct, complete and current. If you want to correct or add any information to your case records, your PLEA worker will assist you to do this.

What can I do if I have concerns or complaints about my rights to privacy?

You can contact Steve Quinlan, he is our Privacy Officer. He is responsible for responding to any concerns or complaints you may have about your rights to privacy. Please do not hesitate to contact him at: 604-708-2622 or complaints@plea.bc.ca. You may involve an advocate if you wish to.

**Note: There are two different laws that regulate how we must protect the privacy of your personal information. The *Personal Information Protection Act* sets out the ground rules for how we collect, use or disclose information about you. It governs all the information that we collect directly from you and the records that we create. The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* sets out the rules that government ministries and other public bodies must follow. This means that there are different regulations for all the information about you that we receive from ministry workers. PLEA cannot give you direct access to this personal information without your ministry worker's written permission. Your PLEA worker will assist you in making this request if this is something you want to do.