

## POLICY & PROCEDURES

### COUN-04 ELECTRONIC STORAGE OF CONFIDENTIAL DATA

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#### PREAMBLE

In Canada, the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act<sup>1</sup> (PIPEDA) governs personal information stored electronically. It specifies the rules to govern collection, use or disclosure of the personal information in the course of recognizing the right of privacy of individuals with respect to their personal information. It also specifies the rules for the organizations to collect, use, and disclose personal information. While Physiotherapy Education Accreditation Canada (PEAC) does not collect personal information specifically, it does collect significant amounts confidential information about education programs which PEAC is entrusted to protect.

The Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada (OPC) has developed guidelines<sup>2</sup> to explain how the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) applies to transfers of personal information to a third party, including a third party operating outside of Canada, for processing. One of the key findings:

*“It is important for organizations to assess the risks that could jeopardize the integrity, security and confidentiality of customer personal information when it is transferred to third-party service providers operating outside of Canada.”*

PEAC gathers confidential organizational information including sensitive financial, educational, and academic data from programs and about individuals in those programs. It is PEAC's responsibility to ensure that this data is securely stored and that its security is at no time jeopardized by the transfer of information through or to third-party service providers such as website servers, cloud servers and other data management strategies especially those operating outside of Canada.

#### 1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 PEAC holds contracts with a third-party data service provider (“vendor”) only if/when
- a privacy risk-assessment has been completed
  - the terms of service agreement with the vendor are robust around security measure, systems, and processes
  - the vendor uses sound encryption methods

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<sup>1</sup> PIPEDA can be found at this link: <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/P-8.6/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.priv.gc.ca/information/guide/2009/gl\\_dab\\_090127\\_e.cfm](http://www.priv.gc.ca/information/guide/2009/gl_dab_090127_e.cfm)

- 1.2 All PEAC volunteers (Board members, Committee members, Peer Review Team members) and contractors must store confidential information only with PEAC approved third-party data service providers.
- 1.3 All PEAC volunteers (Board members, Committee members, Peer Review Team members) and contractors must store confidential information on computers (desktop/laptop/tablets) to which access is password protected.
- 1.4 All PEAC volunteers and contractors must:
  - i. use only USB keys which are password protected (ie. which require the use of a password in order to access the files saved on the USB key)AND/OR
  - ii. add password protection to individual documents
- 1.5 All PEAC volunteers and contractors must transmit confidential documents only when the document itself has been password protected. The password must be sent in a separate email.

## **2.0 PROCEDURES**

- 2.1 PEAC will provide information to PEAC volunteers (Board members, Committee members, Peer Review Team members) and contractors regarding approved data-management methods.
- 2.2 All volunteers and contractors will be required to review and sign FORM-06 Confidentiality Agreement, prior to receiving access to any confidential material.
- 2.3 PEAC will notify all Board members and PEAC members when confidential data must be destroyed following conclusion of an accreditation review process, and request confirmation of destruction.
- 2.4 Peer Review Team members and ad-hoc committee members will be required to complete and submit FORM-01 – Confirmation of Document Disposal when requested following destruction of confidential materials.
- 2.5 PEAC contractors will be required to complete and submit FORM-01 at the time of the termination of a contract.

## **3.0 GUIDELINES**

- 3.1 Data service providers requiring consideration include but are not limited to:
  - Website and email hosting providers
  - Online fax services
  - Off-site back up services
  - Online survey companies (Survey Monkey, Fluid Surveys)
  - Cloud-based document viewers/editors (Google Drive, DropBox, Microsoft 365)
  - Cloud-based email servers – Mobile Outlook, Gmail, Yahoo mail

<b>Policy Number: COUN-04</b>	
Date of last revision	Associated documents
<i>Nov 2011</i>	PEAC Member Handbook
<i>June 2013</i>	PRT Handbook
<i>Apr 2016</i>	FORM-01 Confirmation of Document Disposal
	FORM-06 Confidentiality Agreement