



**Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
Review Office**

PRESS RELEASE

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Privacy Review Officer Launches Privacy Review of Workers' Compensation Board

Dulcie McCallum, the Nova Scotia Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Review Officer, confirmed today that she has initiated an investigation of privacy compliance by the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia ["WCB"].

"I became very concerned late last week when stories emerged that workers who had dealings with the WCB had received someone else's personal information in the mail. Our focus will be on those individuals whose personal information may have been shared with another person without their consent or knowledge. This raises some very important privacy issues for people with claims at the WCB, not the least of which is that WCB files typically contain a lot of personal information including health information," said Ms. McCallum.

"On Friday I indicated that by early this week I would make a decision with respect to the alleged privacy breaches. Today I confirm that I have notified WCB that based on my new authority under the Privacy Review Officer Act I have initiated an investigation with respect to the allegations reported and others that have surfaced since. The new legislation enables me as the Privacy Review Officer to launch an investigation on my own initiative where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a person or persons has contravened the privacy protections under the legislation. WCB has acknowledged the notification and has indicated a willingness to cooperate in the investigation," said Ms. McCallum.

In September 2009, the new *Privacy Review Officer Act* was proclaimed providing Nova Scotians with the right to seek an independent review at the Review Office of any decision made by a public body with respect to allegations of a privacy breach. In addition, the new statute enabled the Review Officer to initiate an investigation on her own motion, conduct research and do public education with respect to privacy matters.

"This is the very kind of situation contemplated by the new statute for my own motion. Typically a public report will be issued at the conclusion of the investigation," concluded McCallum.

For more information on the Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Review Office please visit www.foipop.ns.ca or phone 902-424-4684 or 1-866-243-1564 (province-wide toll free).

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