

AIA PRIVACY POLICY

Introduction

The Alberta Institute of Agriologists (AIA) is required to adhere to privacy legislation, including the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) that came into force in Alberta on January 1, 2004. The Institute is committed to following the provisions in PIPA to ensure that the collection, use and disclosure of personal information about members and other individuals is protected.

Personal information collected by the Institute

Personal information means information about an identifiable individual, but does not include business contact information such as business address, email and telephone number.

The Institute collects the personal information it requires to carry out its functions under the *Agrology Profession Act (APA)*, the *Agrology Profession Regulation* and Institute Bylaws. The information collected is necessary for the Institute in its role as a regulatory body. The Institute will collect, use and disclose personal information only to the extent that it is reasonably required for meeting its regulatory obligations or as otherwise authorized by law.

Examples of personal information that the Institute might have about its members include:

- Personal contact information, including home/email address and telephone number(s).
- Information originally submitted when applying for membership with the Institute, such as written references, criminal record check information, educational history and examination results.
- Financial information, such as credit card numbers if fees were paid by credit card.
- Information received and obtained because of a complaint.
- Personal health information provided by the member in relation to an investigation into the member's conduct, capacity or need for accommodations.

Examples of personal information that the Institute might have about other individuals include:

- Personal contact information, including home/email address and telephone number(s) collected in relation to the investigation of a complaint against a member.
- Information received and obtained because of a complaint, including personal health information about an individual relating to the investigation of a complaint against a member.

Method of collecting personal information

The Institute collects personal information directly from members or other individuals who encounter our members or the Institute.

The Institute only collects third party information if it is authorized to do so by law and/or if consent is obtained.

For example:

- Individuals who wish to be registered must provide the names of referees. Letters of reference and/or audio recorded references are collected from these individuals.

- The Institute also collects information from third parties if there is a complaint made against a member. In such circumstances, the Institute exercises its authority under the APA to collect information from individuals, such as the complainant, clients or potential witnesses.

Use of personal information

The Institute uses personal information to regulate the profession of agrology under the APA, the *Agrology Profession Regulation* and Institute Bylaws. Information will normally only be used for the purposes for which it is gathered. Examples of how personal information is used are:

- To assess whether applicants meet the initial requirements for registration with the Institute.
- For completion of the Institute's membership database.
- To assess whether applicants are eligible to have their practice permit renewed or reinstated.
- To provide information, newsletters and notices to members.
- To facilitate payment of fees.
- To facilitate complaints made pursuant to the APA.
- For carrying out the Institute's regulatory duties under the APA.

Disclosure of personal information

For the most part, the Institute uses personal information for internal purposes. Therefore, it is primarily the Institute's employees, committee members, volunteers, consultants and contractors who will have access to personal information about members or other individuals to fulfill statutory duties and functions under the APA, as well as the additional uses identified above.

The Institute releases information as guided by Section 32 of the *Agrology Profession Regulation*. Under that section, the following may be released to a member of the public during regular business hours, on request:

- (a) date of registration
- (b) category of registration
- (c) academic qualifications for registration
- (d) name of the regulated member's current employer and the names of any firms within which the member practices agrology
- (e) business phone number, fax number and e-mail address
- (f) current status of a specific complaint, but only if the request provides the regulated member's name and details of the complaint
- (g) any other information requested if the information is in the possession of the Institute and the regulated member or former member, in writing authorizes the disclosure

The Institute may also disclose personal information to an external party without first obtaining consent for disclosure, where such disclosure is required or permitted by PIPA or other legislation. For example, disclosure of information may occur during the complaints process. Under the APA and the *Agrology Profession Regulation*, the public has access to specific personal information, including information relating to the public register and to public hearings. The Institute may also disclose personal information as authorized by law, including under the following circumstances:

- In response to a subpoena, warrant or court order.
- Pursuant to a lawful request by a government agency.
- To report fraudulent activity or other deceptive practices to another professional regulatory body or to a governmental or law enforcement agency.
- To act in urgent circumstances to protect the personal safety of members or the public.

Protection of personal information

One way that the Institute protects personal information is by training staff to appreciate the importance of privacy and the confidentiality of personal information. All employees, committee members, volunteers, consultants and contractors will be required to adhere to the Institute's Privacy Policy.

In addition, the Institute ensures the security of the personal information in its possession by taking such measures as (a) implementing technological safeguards to secure personal information that is stored in electronic form, (b) ensuring that the areas in which information is stored are reasonably secure, and (c) restricting access to personal information to those with a need to access information to perform their duties.

Unless otherwise authorized by law and as outlined above, the Institute will not disclose personal information without the consent of the person involved.

Retention of personal information

PIPA stipulates that personal information should not be retained longer than is reasonably required to fulfill the purpose for which it was collected. At the same time, such information must be retained for a reasonable period. The Institute may, in its sole discretion, destroy duplicate material that exists in both paper and electronic form.

The Institute will retain personal information during the entire period that a person is a member of the Institute. The Institute may retain personal information for a minimum of 10 years after membership ceases, at which time the information may be rendered non-identifying or securely destroyed.

Access and correction

The *Agrology Profession Act* and *Agrology Profession Regulation* supercedes PIPA regarding access to information allowed in section 32 of the Regulation. Under these two pieces of legislation, the public may gain access to the information allowed in section 32.

Under PIPA, individuals have a right to access records containing their personal information. Upon request and subject to appropriate lawful restrictions, the Institute will give individuals access to the personal information held about them. If a request is complex and requires an extensive or detailed search, the Institute may, at its sole discretion, charge a reasonable fee.

If an individual requests a correction of an error or omission in the personal information, the Institute will, subject to legal limitations, correct the information as soon as is reasonably possible or annotate it with the correction that was requested.

The Institute's Privacy Officer will make every reasonable effort to assist individuals asking for access to, or correction of, their personal information and will respond as accurately and completely as is reasonably possible within the time limits specified in PIPA.

All requests for access to, or correction of, their personal information must be made in writing and must set out in sufficient detail the scope of the request. Requests should be delivered or mailed to the Institute's Privacy Officer, whose contact information is below.

Further information

Persons wanting more information about the Institute's privacy guidelines or wishing to make a complaint about a privacy issue should contact:

Ty Faechner, PAg
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