

When does my survey need to be reviewed by PHSA's Information Access & Privacy Office?

If you are conducting a non-research survey and any of the below criteria are met, your survey **must be reviewed** by PHSA's Information Access & Privacy Office or the BCCDC Privacy Officer (for BCCDC employees only). Examples of non-research surveys include surveys conducted for quality improvement or program evaluation purposes.

The review process involves completing a Privacy Checklist and submitting it to PHSA's Privacy Office or the BCCDC Privacy Officer. For more information, please visit PHSA's intranet page [Surveys & Privacy](#) or contact PHSA's Privacy Office at privacy@phsa.ca.

Please note that these criteria do not apply to REB approved (i.e. research) surveys. For more information on REB approved surveys visit [PHSA's Research Privacy webpage](#).

Your non-research survey must be reviewed if any of the following criteria apply:

- The survey responses or the way in which these responses are presented or shared have the potential to increase the vulnerability of participants or put them at risk of potential harm. For example, if you were asking participants to report on criminal activity and the survey was not anonymous or if you were asking patients to report wrong doings of their health care teams and the survey was not anonymous or sharing the survey results could reasonably be expected to re-identify participants because they represent a group that is unique in some way (i.e., unique health condition, small in number).
- You are not planning to use one of the PHSA recommended platforms listed below.
- You are planning to use external vendors to analyze the personal information of participants.
- The survey inadvertently reveals health or personal information and that information is stored outside of Canada without consent. For example, you are using an unapproved survey platform that stores information outside of Canada and/or the survey email/link sent to the potential participant inadvertently discloses personal health information without consent (e.g., the fact that the individual received service or treatment at a particular clinic).
- You plan to link the results of your survey to other patient data, to data obtained through other surveys, or to data contained in other databases.
- Personal information is collected from third parties such as family members (please note that this does not apply to those who are authorized to provide data on behalf of others such as parents and guardians).
- If you plan to disclose any identifiable information about respondents to a third party.
- The survey involves evaluating the programs of two or more health authorities. Please note that this criteria does not apply to surveys that happen to target individuals that may be patients of multiple health authorities such as population-wide surveys of general topics like personal opinions