

This guideline will inform members of their obligations in regards to protecting the personal information of individuals, including how to communicate with the Tribunal and other members given the need to maintain confidentiality.

### **Confidentiality and Privacy Obligations**

1. All appeal information and documentation – hard copy and electronic - must be protected from being viewed by anyone other than the panel members or the parties to the appeal (s. 88 EAR).
2. Panel members must ensure all appeal documents, and information submitted to them respecting the hearing of an appeal, are kept confidential and in a secure location at all times ((s. 88 EAR); s. 30 FOIPPA).
3. Determinations of a panel must not be disclosed by the chair and members of the panel to any person other than the Chair of the Tribunal (s. 88 EAR).
4. Appeal proceedings before a panel are confidential and the hearing is not open to the public (s. 88 EAR).
5. Panel members must send all appeal documents to the Tribunal within 5 business days of the panel’s determination (s.86 EAR).

## Communication Procedures to Protect Personal Information

Members are to follow these procedures when communicating with the Tribunal and other members:

Confirming availability to sit on a hearing	<b>Phone or email</b> with no personal identifiers
Confirming Conflict of Interest	<b>Phone only</b> as it requires personal identifiers
Sending the draft or final decision to the panel member(s)	<b>Email</b> the body of the decision only (Parts C, D, E and F) and ensure no personal identifiers
Sending the draft or final decision to the Tribunal	<b>Email</b> to <a href="mailto:EAAT@gov.bc.ca">EAAT@gov.bc.ca</a> - electronic correspondence is preferred. <u>Do not email decisions directly to the appeal coordinator due to absences.</u> Place the appeal number in the subject line so the decision can be directed to the appeal coordinator. Draft decision: email the body of the decision only (Parts C, D, E and F) and ensure it does not contain personal identifiers. Final decision: password protect, include the first page and the body of the decision and provide the password to the receptionist by phone. The signature page can be scanned and emailed (preferred) or if scanning is not possible, it can be faxed to 1- 877- 356-9687 (or 250-356-9687)
Returning Appeal Package and original signature page	<b>Mail</b> to the Tribunal within 5 business days of the panel's determination
Urgent matters including inability to attend a hearing due to illness or accident	<b>Phone reception or email</b> to <a href="mailto:EAAT@gov.bc.ca">EAAT@gov.bc.ca</a> Do not email the appeal coordinator directly or leave a voicemail on the appeal coordinator's phone due to absences.

## **Saving and Protecting the Decision**

### Saving the Decision

The decision template will allow decisions to be temporarily saved onto the hard drive. This will allow further edits to be made if necessary.

1. Under File, click “Save As”
2. Under File Name, save as the appeal number you are currently working on. **Do not use the name of the appellant to save your decision!**
3. Password protection – *see below*.

### Password Protection

All decisions forms must be “password protected”.

For MS Word 2007 (Vista):

1. On the **Office Button**, select **Prepare**.
2. From the **Prepare tab**, select **Encrypt Document**.
3. In the **Password to open** box, type a password, and then click **OK**.
4. In the **Re-enter password to open** box, type the password again, and then click **OK**.

For prior version of MS Word:

1. On the **Tools** menu, click **Options**, and click the **Security** tab.
2. In the **Password to open** box, type a password, and then click **OK**.
3. In the **Re-enter password to open** box, type the password again, and then click **OK**.

If using a different word processing program, use that program’s help function to find out how to add a password to a document.

### Deleting the decision on approval

Once approved, the decision **must be deleted** from your hard drive.

## Avoiding Personal Identifiers

Decisions must not contain personal identifiers as they are posted on the website:

<b>Instead of:</b>	<b>Use:</b>
Ms. Green	the appellant
John Smith	the appellant's husband; Mr. S
Ministry worker Paul Smith	The ministry
Dr. Apple	the appellant's physician; the appellant's physiotherapist; the appellant's psychologist...
the appellant's neighbour, Mrs. Brown	Ms. A, and, if there are multiple people to refer to, Ms. B, Mr. C, etc.
123 Jones Street	the appellant's residence; the appellant's former residence; the appellant's current residence
Spring Medical Clinic	the medical clinic, doctor's office etc.
Apple Pie Employment Agency or the Apple Pie Workplace Skills Program	an employment agency; a workplace skills program
any specific rare medical condition that might identify the appellant	chronic disease, multiple physical disabilities, mobility challenges
moved from Cranbrook to Victoria;	moved from one city to another