
MIDWIFERY REGULATORY COUNCIL OF NOVA SCOTIA (MRCNS)

PRIVACY STATEMENT AND THIRD PARTY DATA SHARING POLICY

Introduction

The Midwifery Regulatory Council of Nova Scotia (“**MRCNS**”) is committed to maintaining the confidentiality and security of personal information. MRCNS is accountable for all personal information under its control.

This Privacy Statement describes how MRCNS collects, uses and discloses the personal information of its members, applicants, and other individuals who visit the [MRCNS website](#), or otherwise interact with MRCNS.

Personal information is information about an identifiable individual, which includes names, addresses, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, credit card information, or other contact information. It includes any personal identifiable data such as date of birth, social insurance number, age, marital status, race, national or ethnic origin and religion. It also includes educational information, such as educational program name and graduation year, previous licensure status, language proficiency and opinions (includes academic and/or professional references or clinical/competence assessments) about an individual.

Accountability

MRCNS is accountable for all personal information under its control, including information which it may transfer to a third party. MRCNS collects, uses and discloses information in accordance with privacy best practices, and its obligations under the [Midwifery Act](#) and [Midwifery Regulations](#), and the [Fair Registration Practices Act \(FRPA\)](#) of Nova Scotia. MRCNS staff are trained in standards and guidelines with respect to privacy and confidentiality.

MRCNS has designated an individual as a Privacy Officer who is responsible for everyday operation and control of personal information as well as MRCNS’s compliance with this Statement. If you have any questions about the privacy practices of MRCNS, or about this Privacy Statement, please contact our Privacy Officer at info@mrcns.ca.

Collection and Use of Personal Information

MRCNS is required, pursuant to the Midwifery Act, to regulate the practice of midwifery in the province of Nova Scotia in accordance with the registration, licensing and professional conduct processes set out in the Act and its regulations. MRCNS also has the duty to establish, maintain and promote standards of midwifery practice and to consult with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia (“CPSNS”) and the Nova Scotia College of Nursing (“NSCN”) on these standards.

MRCNS uses personal information of its members to carry out these functions, and in support of these purposes.

The purposes for which MRCNS collects and uses member personal information include:

- Registration and licensing applications and renewals;
- Credentials verification and assessment, which may include sharing of information with regulatory bodies in Canada and in other jurisdictions;
- Record of membership and licensees / member status;
- Consultation with CPSNS and NSCN, as required by law;
- All regulatory processes;
- Complaints and investigations (we ensure the confidentiality of the complainant and the practitioner as set out in MRCNS's publication policies);
- Communication with members;
- Publication distribution;
- Demographics: research, analysis and planning;
- Correspondence with third parties as required by our objectives and to interchange information with regulatory bodies worldwide;
- Compilation of statistics;
- Payment of fees; and
- Surveys.

If MRCNS wishes to use personal information for a purpose not identified or not consistent with an identified purpose, the new purpose will be identified and MRCNS will seek consent prior to use, unless required or permitted by law.

Collection of Personal Information at License Renewal

As part of the annual process of license renewal, members are required to complete the Clinical License Renewal Form. Through this process, MRCNS collects information regarding clinical competencies and disclosures regarding past disciplinary or other regulatory proceedings.

The form includes a section on voluntary self-identification regarding a member's identity as Indigenous, African Nova Scotian or other ethnicity. This information is collected by MRCNS as a way to actively promote diversity and inclusion within the healthcare system and in response to reports such as the Truth and Reconciliation Report which calls upon *all levels of government to increase the number of Indigenous professionals working in the healthcare field; ensure the retention of Indigenous health-care providers in Indigenous communities; and provide cultural competency training for all health care professionals.*

Members are not obligated to self-identify via the renewal process. Those who do not wish to provide the information are not obligated to, and there is no impact on license renewal.

Collection and Use of Personal Information from Complainants

MRCNS collects personal information that an individual may provide when making a complaint against a midwife, including the complainant's name, email address, phone number, and specifics regarding the complaint. This information is only used in order to process and investigate the complaint.

Other Collection and Use of Information

MRCNS may also collect information from members or non-members who contact us via email, phone or otherwise through our website.

The website <https://mrcns.ca/> uses cookies. A cookie is a small file placed on the hard drive of your computer. You may refuse to accept browser cookies by activating the appropriate setting on your browser. However, if you select this setting you may be unable to access certain parts of the MRCNS website. Unless you have adjusted your browser setting so that it will refuse cookies, our system will issue cookies when you direct your browser to our website. The website server automatically logs information about visits to the website such as IP address, date, time and duration. This information is used for system administrative purposes, statistical analysis, and to update the website.

We use information collected from website visitors to present the website and its contents to website visitors, to provide visitors with the information or services requested, to notify visitors about changes to our website and any services offered, and to improve the website and services.

Consent

MRCNS is dedicated to ensuring that members, applicants and others are aware of the purposes for which personal information is gathered, the use of the information and reasons for disclosure. MRCNS obtains consent of the individual for the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. In certain circumstances, the consent for the individual can be obtained after collection of the information, but before use.

MRCNS will not, as a condition of the supply of goods or services, require that an individual consent to the collection, use, or disclosure of information beyond what is required for legitimate and communicated purposes. Some information related to licensing, competence and professional development must be provided as a condition of obtaining and maintaining one's registration status.

There may be circumstances where consent may be implied. In such cases, the purpose for the collection and use of personal information must be apparent and MRCNS may only use the personal information for the apparent purpose. In such a case, MRCNS will not use that information for any other purpose.

The law provides certain exceptions to the usual requirement to obtain an individual's consent. For example, an organization may collect and use personal information in circumstances where the collection and/or use of such information is clearly in the interests of the individual and consent cannot be obtained in a timely way. Similarly, personal information may be collected and used without the consent of the individual if the information is reasonably required to investigate a breach of an agreement, a violation of the law or investigations related to professional discipline and there is reason to believe that obtaining consent may compromise the availability or accuracy of such information.

Members can withdraw consent anytime for the retention and use of personal information, but only to the extent that such consent withdrawal does not affect the ability of MRCNS to carry out its statutory functions. MRCNS will inform the member of the implications of such withdrawal.

Disclosure and Retention of Personal Information

MRCNS does not sell or trade personal information to third parties. Personal information is only used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was collected with the consent of the individual, or as required by law. We only retain the personal information for as long as it is considered necessary by MRCNS for the purposes for which it was collected, and/or is required by law.

From time to time, MRCNS discloses personal information to third parties for administrative and licensing purposes. Third parties are required to sign confidentiality agreements which reinforce the strict confidentiality obligations on them.

Sharing of Aggregate Data

MRCNS may share aggregate information about its members with stakeholders to help them better understand MRCNS members and their interests. Such aggregate information is used to give MRCNS demographic information about its members in order to improve the organization and the programs and services we provide. Aggregate information does not include individually identifiable information.

Data collected at license renewal (or otherwise) about Indigenous, African Nova Scotian and other identities may be shared by MRCNS in aggregate form with the Ministry of Health, Health Authorities, Indigenous organizations, other partners, and the public. Individually identifiable data on Indigenous identity will not be disclosed outside of MRCNS, except as may be permitted or required by applicable law or court order.

Accuracy and Individual Access

MRCNS is dedicated to maintaining personal information in a form that is accurate, complete and current as is necessary for the fulfillment of MRCNS's purposes. Members are encouraged to contact MRCNS and update any changes in their personal information.

Members may contact the Privacy Officer at any time to discuss access to personal information. Upon written request, access will be provided. A small fee may be applied to cover the cost of administration. In certain situations, such as legal or regulatory requirements, MRCNS may not be able to offer an individual access to their personal information and will provide the reasons for denial. MRCNS will correct or amend personal information that is shown to be incomplete or inaccurate.

Safeguards

MRCNS takes reasonable steps to ensure that personal information is protected against loss, unauthorized access, use, disclosure and alteration. This protection applies to both electronic and hard copy forms.

MRCNS uses encryption technology and security certificates (https) on all web pages that require members or applicants to submit payment online through the MRCNS registration portal at www.mrcns.ca. All transactions are handled by a third-party payment processor that meets strict security requirements.

MRCNS takes reasonable steps to protect personal information, but we are not responsible or liable for the security of personal information on external websites to which we provide links (e.g. non-MRCNS) websites. External links are provided for the convenience of users. MRCNS encourages members to read the privacy policies of all websites visited, especially if personal information is shared.

For more information on MRCNS's Privacy Statement:

If you have any questions about this Privacy Statement or about the privacy practices of MRCNS, please contact the Privacy Officer at info@mrcns.ca.

Approved by the MRCNS September 2023