

INTERIM GUIDANCE – Use of Video Conferencing Services

For Service Providers and CLBC Staff

**** This guidance is valid only for the interim period as part of the COVID-19 Emergency Response ****

Purpose:

Given the importance of physical distancing, there has been significant work in the sector to identify virtual methods for staying connected, including through platforms such as Skype, Zoom and Facetime.

This *Interim Guidance* document was created to address concerns around how to use virtual platforms while also complying with the government's privacy requirements. It should be considered as an addendum to the *Organizational Privacy Policy* and *CLBC Privacy Guidelines*. Together these policies, and related tools, provide CLBC staff and providers with the requirements and guidance needed to protect the privacy and rights of individuals accessing CLBC-funded services.

Provisions:

The Minister of Citizen Services has issued an order enabling broader use of these technologies (see *References and Tools* for link). This order supports CLBC staff and service providers to use video conferencing services during the COVID-19 emergency.

During this interim period CLBC staff can use Zoom, non-government Skype or FaceTime and other video conferencing platforms **only** when **all** the following requirements are met:

- An external partner (e.g. service provider) has initiated the call. **CLBC staff always use the government's Skype for Business when initiating a call.** External partners can open and use government Skype invitations even if they do not have Skype for Business.
- The PrivacyOfficerCLBC@gov.bc.ca has been consulted.
- Identifying information of individuals **is not** included in discussion e.g. SIN, birth date, address, first and last name used together (using first names alone is fine). If you need to discuss identifying information, please use a phone call.
- Discussion of personal information (e.g. health status, behavior, assessments) is kept to the minimum necessary for operation of the CLBC service.
- Video calls or conference calls **are not** recorded – CLBC staff confirm the host has turned off this option.

Privacy and Security Considerations:

Video conferencing services such as Zoom, Facetime and non-government Skype all collect information about the users of their services, and are subject to frequent security breaches. In addition, all aspects of the video and conversation may be accessible to the provider of the service, its partners and potentially the host of the call and may be used for marketing, research or any other purpose at the discretion of the provider of the service. This includes your IP address, email, network provider, location as well as any aspect of the call.

Before using any non-government video conferencing platform, CLBC Staff and service providers must take precautions to protect personal information.

The following actions will reduce the risk to privacy and security:

- Meeting links are **directly** sent to the participants, never via general forum
- Participants use a password to access a meeting. The password is sent separately from the meeting link.
- Each participant is identified, and the “meeting” is locked to prevent unauthorized parties joining.
- No one joins the meeting before the host.
- No files or documents are transferred using the video link.
- All participants on the video meeting are informed that their information may be stored outside of Canada.
- Participants check the Alerts and Advisories at the [Canadian Centre for Cyber Security](#) before considering a meeting invitation on an alternative platform.
- The rules and limitations about the discussions in the meeting (see *Provisions* above) are understood by all.

If you have any questions after reading this document, contact PrivacyOfficerCLBC@gov.bc.ca.

References and Tools:

Minister of Citizens Services, Broader use of Tech in COVID-19 Response:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020CITZ0005-000588>

[CLBC Privacy Guidelines](#)

[Organizational Privacy Policy](#)

[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPPA\)](#)

Canadian Centre for Cyber Security: <https://cyber.gc.ca/en/alerts/considerations-when-using-video-teleconference-products-and-services>