

British Columbia News

British Columbia legislates a “duty-to-document”

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Victoria - British Columbia will become the first Canadian province to legislate a duty to document, Finance Minister Michael de Jong announced today.

Bill 6, Information Management (Documenting Government Decisions) Amendment Act, 2017, will:

- help improve the way the Province manages valuable information on behalf of its citizens;
- reinforce British Columbia’s commitment to open governance; and
- enhance compliance with best practices in information management.

The amendments address recommendations by former information and privacy commissioner David Loukidelis, enshrining in law a key aspect of British Columbia’s current records policy requiring that public servants document important government decisions.

A legislated “duty to document” means public servants will have to create records that document the key business decisions of government. Inclusion in the Information Management Act also will extend this legal requirement to the government bodies listed in the legislation.

The proposed changes will enhance and clarify the oversight powers of the chief records officer, whose mandate includes promoting effective information management practices across government bodies. With a legislated authority to undertake reviews of government’s information management practices and make recommendations for improvement, the chief records officer will be better equipped to enhance compliance and support government’s role as a trusted steward of the public’s information.

Quote:

Minister of Finance Michael de Jong –

“Together, these amendments will ensure the Information Management Act remains the strongest legislation of its kind in Canada. The duty-to-document legislation will formalize this good practice in legislation while ensuring British Columbia remains at the forefront of information management with strong oversight and consistent practice across government.”

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