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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner issues advisory on COVID-19 related scams

Diane McLeod-McKay offers suggestions for individuals and organizations

WHITEHORSE – The Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) for Yukon has developed an advisory to help individuals avoid falling victim to scams that attempt to capitalize on fears and concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The advisory also includes best practices for organizations that work with and store personal information.

As IPC, part of Diane McLeod-McKay's role is to promote compliance with privacy laws and inform the public about their privacy rights. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, her office has been working to increase awareness amongst public bodies and custodians and their employees, as well as the general public, about the importance of privacy and access to information, as well as risks and concerns that are emerging as a result of the pandemic.

“The response to COVID-19 has included a number of unique measures being taken by governments and businesses around the world,” said McLeod-McKay. “We have also seen the rise of a new kind of cybercrime, which tries to take advantage of evolving concerns and priorities that citizens may have over COVID-19. This creates new and perhaps unexpected vulnerabilities that can put personal information and finances at risk.”

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The advisory being issued today deals with campaigns run by cybercriminals that are aimed at collecting personal and financial information in order to commit fraud or theft. The campaigns use social media, text messages, emails and robo-calls to impersonate government agencies, businesses or non-government organizations. They may claim that you have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19, that they have information about your government benefit, that they are collecting donations for charities fighting the pandemic, or that they are selling personal protective equipment, such as masks.

“There have been a number of media reports about these scams and so our office has put together an advisory to help Yukon organizations, businesses and citizens understand this threat to privacy, learn how to detect fraudulent activity and avoid becoming its victim,” said McLeod-McKay.

The advisory is located on the IPC website [here](#). If they have questions or concerns, citizens may also contact the IPC office at 867-667-8468 or info@ombudsman.yk.ca.

The Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner, and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner is an independent officer of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. For more information, please go to www.ombudsman.yk.ca.

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