

VERSION 2

Guidance for Recording Meetings and Discussions

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Purpose and Scope

The University of Alberta balances transparency with the protection of individual privacy. This guidance ensures compliance with the *Protection of Privacy Act* (POPA) and the *Access to Information Act* (ATIA). Whether you're staff or a volunteer, if you're recording a university event or meeting—formal or informal—these guidelines will apply.

Note: These guidelines do not apply to academic lectures. For guidance on recording academic classes, please review the [Best Practices for the Recording of Lectures and Other Teaching Materials](#).

1. Determining the Need to Record

The default institutional position is to treat digital meeting recordings as [transitory records](#). This means they exist temporarily, are created for minor or immediate informational purposes only and should be disposed of once they have served their immediate purpose. Under POPA, personal information (including voices and images) should only be collected if it is "directly related to and necessary" for university business.

- **Prioritize Privacy:** If written notes, formal minutes, or a follow-up email can suffice, do not record.
- **Avoid Convenience:** Recording for mere convenience is not compliant with POPA.
- **Essential Purposes:** Reserve recording for high-stakes interactions, such as formal hearings, mandatory training, or complex technical instructions.

2. Legal Requirements

If a recording is necessary, you should comply with the following:

- **Give Notice:** State why you are recording, your legal authority (*POPA 4(c)*), and who to contact with questions. Provide them with options, if possible (e.g. Turning off camera, mute, not attending meeting, etc.). See the IPRMO Approved [POPA Notification Statement](#) to be used in these cases.
 - The legal authority (*Section 4(c) of POPA*).
 - The specific purpose of the recording.
 - Contact information for someone who can answer questions about the collection.

3. Using AI Scribing Tools

When using AI scribing tools to record meetings, the following should be considered:

- **Transitory Records:** AI transcripts should be treated as [transitory](#) tools to summarize key ideas. Delete the recording and transcript immediately after the summary is finalized.
- **Mandatory Notice:** You must provide explicit notice if an automated system (AI) is used to generate content or inform decisions. Use the U of A approved [Notice Template](#) for guidance.
- **Accuracy:** You are responsible for reviewing AI content for errors before it becomes part of the official record.

4. Storage, Security, and Access

- **Security:** Store all recordings on university-approved, [encrypted platforms](#) (e.g., Google Drive). Never use personal or mobile devices for primary storage.
- **Retention:** If a recording is used to make a decision affecting an individual, it must be retained in accordance with approved retention schedules or for at least one year in accordance with *section 6(b) of the POPA*.
- **Access:** Under ATIA, individuals have a right to access recordings containing their personal information. The university must redact third-party information before release.

Recording Meetings & Discussions Primer

The "Golden Rule": Default to Notes

If you elect to record treat the recording as transitory. If a follow-up email or manual notes will suffice, consider not creating a digital recording.

Before You Press "Record"

1. **Give Notice:** State why you are recording, your legal authority (*POPA 4(c)*), and who to contact with questions. Provide them with options, if possible (e.g. Turning off camera, mute, not attending the meeting, etc.). See the IPRMO Approved [POPA Notification Statement](#) to be used in these cases.
2. **Consider Approved Tools:** Consider using U of A Google Gemini for AI scribing. Using unapproved tools requires a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA).

Using AI Tools Safely

- **Notification:** Explicitly tell participants if an AI tool is being used to take notes.
- **Length:** Set Google Gemini to "Standard" length to minimize information collection.
- **Cleanup:** Treat transcripts as [transitory](#). Once your summary is done, delete the original AI recording and transcript immediately.

Security & Retention

- **Where to Store:** Use [encrypted](#), University-approved storage like Google Drive. Do not store on personal devices.
- **When to Keep:** If the recording influences a decision about a person, keep it for one year so they can exercise their right to access it.
- **Who has access:** Only employees with authorized business needs
- **Access Requests:** Be aware that any recording you make is an official university record and is subject to access requests under ATIA.

Need Help?

- **General Privacy/ATIA Questions:** Information, Privacy and Records Management Office (IPRMO) at privacy@ualberta.ca.
- **Research:** Contact [Research Administrative Services](#)