



OFFICE OF THE
POLICE COMPLAINT COMMISSIONER

British Columbia, Canada

Media Release

August 6, 2019

OPCC: 2017-14249
RR 19-03

Sensitive Young Offender information accessed and disclosed

A senior Vancouver Police Officer has been disciplined for accessing sensitive information for a personal purpose and disclosing it to unauthorized persons.

On July 18, 2019, an independent adjudicator issued a judgement into the unauthorized access and release of sensitive police information, including information protected by the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA). A senior Officer of the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) was found to have accessed and disclosed the information for a personal purpose. The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner provided oversight of the investigation into the matter and appointed an independent adjudicator to review the decision of the Vancouver Police Department Discipline Authority.

Determining the officer committed misconduct, the adjudicator imposed three, five-day suspensions, without pay, to be served concurrently and concluded that *“the seriousness of this misconduct by a senior officer, particularly where much of the subject matter is data protected by the YCJA, merits discipline that will serve as a deterrence to other members”*.

Acknowledging the VPD’s work to date on protecting information, the adjudicator recommended the Chief Constable place a *“renewed focus”* on training in relation to police databases and disclosure of information in light of *“an increasing, and evolving, public awareness of the importance of privacy responsibilities generally, and the obligations of members in particular with respect to police databases and information on those databases.”*

The name of the officer has been withheld to protect the identity of the Young Person.

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Quotes:

Clayton Pecknold, Police Compliant Commissioner

“Police are entrusted with sensitive data about British Columbians and must adhere to strict rules in its use and disclosure. Where a police officer disregards those rules purposefully, the public must be assured that serious consequences will result and appropriate steps will be taken to prevent recurrence. While a senior police officer has been disciplined, I also recommend all Chief Constables and Police Boards review this decision carefully and ensure their protection of information policies are robust and current.”

Key Facts:

- The Police Complaint Commissioner is a civilian, independent Officer of the Legislature overseeing complaints, investigations and discipline involving municipal police in British Columbia.
- Independent adjudicators are retired judges appointed under the *BC Police Act* to decide matters referred to them by the Police Complaint Commissioner.
- Discipline Authorities are generally senior ranking police officers who are required under the *Police Act* to make determinations regarding the investigation and discipline of police officers alleged to have committed misconduct incidents of misconduct by police officers.
- The Police Complaint Commissioner may also refer matters to Crown Counsel for consideration of prosecution; make recommendations to Police Boards or to government regarding policies, practices or systemic issues that may contribute to the misconduct.

Further details may be found on the Review on the Record page of the OPCC’s webpage, located at www.opcc.bc.ca.

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