

2021-05 October 19, 2021

By E-mail: 2 Pages plus Attachment

Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA)

UPDATE: deadline changed to December 31, 2023

The original deadline for school districts to implement PIDA policies was December 31, 2021. As of July 29, 2021, this deadline is extended to December 31, 2023.

Background

PIDA came into effect on December 1, 2019. The purpose of PIDA is to establish whistleblower protection for public sector employees.

In September 2020, BCPSEA was asked to canvass school districts to determine if the K-12 public education sector could implement PIDA by December 31, 2021. School districts advised BCPSEA that, with assistance, they would be able to implement PIDA by December 31, 2021.

This date for implementation has now been changed to December 31, 2023.

The Policy Toolkit

As was shared on April 21, 2021, please find attached *Public Interest Disclosure Act: Policy Toolkit*. This toolkit was created by BCPSEA, along with external legal counsel, to help school districts implement PIDA. It includes:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Template Policy
- Template Administrative Procedures
- Template Annual Report, which is required to be filed by the Superintendent.

Next Steps

School districts are required to take the following steps to prepare for implementation **on or before December 31, 2023**:

- communicate to employees about PIDA and the procedures for making a disclosure (PIDA section 4);
- establish procedures to manage disclosures by employees (PIDA section 9); and
- designate at least one senior official to be a designated officer to receive and investigate disclosures by employees (PIDA section 10 (1)).

The Toolkit will assist districts to meet these requirements. Some school districts may already have whistleblower or safe disclosure policies and procedures. Districts should review any such policies and administrative procedures in the context of the template materials in the Toolkit.

Questions

If you have any questions about this Toolkit, please contact Chris Beneteau, Senior Director, Employee Relations and Sector Initiatives (chrisb@bcpsea.bc.ca).

In the future, BCPSEA will develop a training webinar and supporting materials. Information about the training will be shared with you.

Attachment: *Public Interest Disclosure Act*. Policy Toolkit