

# PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (PIA)

## WHAT IS A PIA?

- A PIA helps determine whether new technologies or initiatives involving personal information raise privacy risks
- PIAs should be conducted when there are:
  - changes in collecting, using or disclosing personal information
  - changes in technology or systems
  - new programs or projects
  - major changes to existing programs or business processes
  - additional systems or data linkages
- Some privacy laws require that a PIA be completed

## BENEFITS OF A PIA:

- PIAs offer many benefits, including:
  - acting as an early warning system
  - providing evidence that an organization acted to prevent a breach
  - exposing assumptions and communications gaps
  - informing decision-making
  - increasing trust and credibility
  - supporting legal compliance



## STEPS TO COMPLETE A PIA

1

### Conduct a preliminary assessment

Is a Preliminary PIA sufficient, or do the risks warrant a more detailed assessment offered by a full PIA?

2

### Assemble the PIA team

Ideally, this will include a privacy expert and the system/business owner and could consist of IT, technical architects, change management teams, security, etc.

3

### Check for a template

If your organization does not have one, the government may have one you can leverage and/or are required to use.

4

### Develop the PIA Report

Describe the project, map information flows, examine how the project impacts privacy, assess compliance with applicable legislation and privacy principles, identify risks and suggest mitigation activities.

5

### Finalize the PIA Report

The final PIA should contain an action plan that identifies risk mitigation activities, the implementation timeline and the individual accountable for the action.

6

### Follow-up

A PIA is a living document that should include a review schedule. There may also be triggers for an update, such as changes to legislation.