



**Media release**

**4 May 2022**

## **Privacy Commissioner releases Community Attitudes Survey Results this Privacy Awareness Week NSW 2022**

Today, the NSW Privacy Commissioner, Samantha Gavel published the results of the Information and Privacy Commission's (IPC) latest two-yearly survey of NSW community attitudes towards privacy. The results provide a broad and indicative sense of the public's view of how privacy is regarded in areas such as data breaches by NSW government agencies, citizens' awareness of their right to access their personal information, where to go to report the misuse of personal information or how to make a privacy complaint.

### **Privacy**

The results indicate that 93% of respondents felt that it is important that NSW government agencies protect their personal or health information.

Privacy Commissioner, Samantha Gavel, said, "Our surveys consistently demonstrate that the NSW public places a high importance on their rights and expects NSW government agencies to protect their personal information.

"Similar to previous years, two thirds of respondents (65%) indicated that they were aware of their right to access personal information from at least one of the agencies listed, with a third then saying that they would contact the agency directly for help.

"However, a quarter of respondents (26%) indicated that they are still unsure of where to go to access their personal information."

### **Privacy breaches**

For the first time, the IPC also included questions relating to data breaches. The vast majority (85%) of respondents agreed that government should provide assistance when there is a breach of personal information by a government agency.

Commissioner Gavel said, "The results show that 17% of respondents had been impacted by a breach and of those who had been affected, 37% of the instances had occurred at a NSW government agency. Encouragingly, many of the respondents who had been affected by a NSW government data breach reported that the agency assisted them by informing them of the breach (59%) and providing advice on what to do next (54%).

"The survey results show that agencies are already providing support to those affected by a data breach, however the upcoming Mandatory Notification of Data Breach Scheme will enable agencies to better protect citizens' privacy and ensure that they have the appropriate mechanisms in place to assist citizens in the event of a breach."

Key findings of the study include:

- 93% of respondents felt that it is important that NSW agencies protect their personal or health information
- 80% were concerned about data being shared or released inappropriately



- 57% were aware of their right to lodge a complaint or seek a review with an agency if they feel their privacy has been breached, a decrease from 63% in 2020
- 65% of respondents were aware of their right to access personal information from at least one of the agencies listed
- Respondents continue to have uncertainty about where they would go to access their personal information with 26% indicating that they were unsure, a slight increase from 24% on 2020
- 85% of respondents agreed that government should provide assistance when there is a breach of personal information by a government agency
- 17% indicated that they had been impacted by a data breach, and of those who had been affected, 37% of the instances had occurred at a NSW government agency
- Respondents impacted by a breach by a NSW government agency reported that the agency assisted them by informing them of the breach (59%) and providing advice on what to do next (54%).
- Over half (56%) of respondents were notified within six months of the data breach, 34% between six to 12 months and 10% of respondents being notified more than 12 months later
- Respondents indicated that common effects resulting from a breach were:
  - the need to replace identity documents (40%)
  - identity theft/fraud (37%)
  - the need to change passwords of online accounts (29%)
  - monetary loss (19%).

Commissioner Gavel said, “The research reinforces that the public expects that agencies that collect their personal information use it appropriately and keep it secure.

“Agencies build trust in government by building good privacy practices into their decision-making, as well as the design and structure of their information systems, business processes, products and services. Having the correct systems in place will lead to better outcomes for all NSW citizens and I look forward to working with agencies to improve upon future results.”

The full results from the Community Attitudes Survey can be downloaded via the [IPC website](#).

**ENDS**

**For further information, please contact:**

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### **About the Information and Privacy Commission:**

The Information and Privacy Commission NSW (IPC) is an independent statutory authority that administers New South Wales' legislation dealing with privacy and access to government information. The IPC supports the Information Commissioner and the Privacy Commissioner in fulfilling their legislative responsibilities and functions and to ensure individuals and agencies can access consistent information, guidance and coordinated training about information access and privacy matters.

### **About the NSW Privacy Commissioner**

Samantha Gavel was appointed as NSW Privacy Commissioner on 4 September 2017. Her role is to promote public awareness and understanding of privacy rights in NSW, as well as provide information, support, advice and assistance to agencies and the general public.

For further information about the IPC visit our website at [www.ipc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au)

### **Community Attitudes Study 2022 Results**

Read the full results here for the [Community Attitudes Study 2022 into Privacy](#)

Read the full results here for the [Community Attitudes Study 2022 into Privacy Breaches](#)