

Access to City Services Without Fear overview for staff

- The City of Vancouver's Access to City Services Without Fear policy (policy.vancouver.ca/COUN003.pdf) enables all members of the public to use City services without fear that the City will ask for information about their immigration status or provide this information to other institutions or orders of government unless required by law.

What you need to know

- There are many different reasons why people are undocumented. As part of implementing the Access to City Services Without Fear, we are sharing material that include community-developed scenarios and frequently asked questions to help underscore the importance of the policy and the impacts of its absence.
- This policy is consistent with our core values of equity, inclusion and safety for all community members.
- It applies to **City of Vancouver services**, such as 3-1-1, community services such as street and homeless outreach, emergency operations, fire and rescue, garbage, recycling and green waste collection, permits, public hearings, and water, sewers and drainage.
- [Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation](#) and [Vancouver Public Library](#) have access without fear policies for their services. Learn more at parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca and vpl.ca.
- [Vancouver Police Department](#) (VPD) has access without fear guidelines for their teams; however, they maintain the discretion to ask about a person's immigration status and communicate with Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) regarding this. Learn more at vpd.ca.
- It's important we all understand the City's policy and how we support this work.
- Know what you need to ask, and ask no more.



Your role – policy in action

- We want everyone to feel safe accessing City services regardless of immigration status.
- Our actions have impacts – sharing an individual's immigration status may unintentionally cause devastating outcomes such as potential deportation, incarceration, and/or psychological and physical harm.

- Proof of immigration status or citizenship is not required to access City public services and we should never ask for it.
- We have an obligation to provide safety and protect everyone's privacy:
 - **Don't ask** for proof of immigration or citizenship even as a form of identification
 - **Don't record** immigration status as part of registration, forms or notes
 - **Don't share** personal information, unless required by law to disclose (in consultation with Privacy Office or Legal), always maintain privacy and confidentiality

Why is this important

- Implementing this policy is a critical component of our work to create a more equitable Vancouver.
- The fear of being asked about immigration status is a major deterrent to accessing services, and we know that racialized people, migrants and people with uncertain or no status are disproportionately impacted.
- People who are racialized are at increased risk of racial profiling and discrimination due to perceptions about immigration status, especially when accessing public services and support. This includes services we provide as well as other organizations in Vancouver.
- We all have a role to uphold human rights of everyone.

How you can learn more and support this work

- All City staff are encouraged to:
 - Review the policy, FAQs and scenarios;
 - Help identify, update or raise issues with procedures when they come up;
 - Become an Access Without Fear champion;
 - Inform community members about our policies, and;
 - Share materials and advocate for policy change with our partners.
- If there are currently instances where immigration status may be directly or indirectly referenced by City staff these processes need to be reviewed and modified to ensure immigration status is not referenced or explored in any way.
- When working with partner organizations, the City aims to encourage them to adopt their own access without fear policies.
- Reach out to equity@vancouver.ca if you:
 - Are interested in helping champion this work with support from your manager, to help your coworkers address questions or challenges, or;
 - Have questions or concerns about a City process that doesn't align with our Access to City Services without Fear policy.
- Visit the Access to City Services Without Fear Policy page on Currents (<https://currents.vancouver.ca/About/Teams/Arts-Culture-Community->

[Services/SitePages/access-to-city-services-without-fear.aspx](#)) to find the policy and supporting material including this reference sheet, FAQs and scenarios and posters.

- This material is also available at <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/access-to-city-services-without-fear-information-for-staff.aspx> (or you can scan the **QR code**) for staff who are not on the City network.
- You can also learn more about other initiatives we are working on to create a more equitable Vancouver at vancouver.ca/people-programs/equity-diversity-inclusion

