

Privacy Statement Under the Personal Health Information Act

Introduction

Avalon Laboratories Inc. (“Avalon Labs”) was incorporated to service the laboratory needs of various industry and government sectors in Newfoundland and Labrador. From oil and gas to mining, municipal water testing to food safety, and most recently, **clinical diagnostic testing**. Avalon Labs provides a broad suite of analytical services to its clients.

With a nationally accredited full-service laboratory resident in Newfoundland and Labrador we can reduce both the expensive transportation fees and the lost time associated with sample shipments to the mainland thereby shortening the turn-around times for results. This home-grown solution **is backed by** the latest in laboratory equipment and a highly experienced team of laboratory personnel.

Avalon Labs is conveniently located on the edge of the North Atlantic bringing analytical and field services closer to the source than ever before. With clients spanning every industry we have become the largest commercial laboratory, and the first of its kind, in Newfoundland and Labrador.

For clients who avail of our clinical testing service Avalon Labs collects, uses and discloses the personal health information of individuals in accordance with provincial and federal laws. This privacy statement applies to the personal health information that Avalon Labs collects, uses or discloses in the course of operating and administering of clinical diagnostic testing.

This privacy statement describes:

- How to contact Avalon Labs should you have questions about our information handling practices;
- How Avalon Labs collects, uses and discloses your personal health information;
- How Avalon Labs safeguards your personal health information;
- Your right to access and request correction of records containing your personal health information; and
- How to contact the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to discuss a concern you might have about Avalon Labs information handling practices.

The document has been modelled using the *Department of Community Services Privacy statement under the Personal Health Information Act*.

Personal Health Information Act

On April 1st, 2011, the *Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA) came into force in Newfoundland and Labrador. This law:

- Sets out the rules that “custodians” of personal health information must follow in collecting, using, disclosing and safeguarding your information; and
- Provides Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the right to request access to and correction of records containing their personal health information.

Avalon Labs is a “custodian” under the *Personal Health Information Act*. Other examples of “custodians” under the Act include health care professionals like doctors and pharmacists in private practice and the province’s Regional Health Authorities.

For more information about the *Personal Health Information Act*, please visit the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador’s website at www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/PHIA.

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Avalon Labs Designated Contact Person

If you have a question about how Avalon Labs collects, uses or discloses your personal health information, or if you would like to request access to or the correction of a record containing your personal health information, please contact the Avalon Labs designated contact person:

Quality Manager
5 Sea Rose Avenue
St. John's, NL
A1A 0P6
Phone: 709-726-9345 x207

Our Information Handling Practices

Our privacy commitment to you

Avalon Labs takes your privacy seriously and is committed to safeguarding the confidentiality of your information. Avalon Labs will only collect, use or disclose your personal health information in accordance with the provisions of the *Personal Health Information Act* and its regulations or where otherwise permitted or required by law.

Collection of your personal health information

Avalon Labs collects your personal health information for purposes related to overseeing **clinical** diagnostic testing. Those purposes include:

- Collecting personal health information through your healthcare provider in order to deliver you with clinical testing services;
- Providing clinical test result reports to individuals and employers;
- Entering clinical test results into the electronic medical health records system;
- Patient identification and contact tracing purposes through the Ministry of Health, Public Health Laboratory and the Communicable Disease Control; and
- Disclosure to, and retention by, as applicable, the Government of Canada, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Regional Health Authority, and/or to any other governmental entity as may be required by law (including the Centre for Communicable Disease Control).

We will not collect more information than is reasonably necessary to meet the purpose of the collection and we will not collect identifiable personal health information if other information will serve the purpose.

Use and disclosure of your information

Avalon Labs uses and discloses personal health information to:

- Undertake specific activities as permitted or required by law (ex. to comply with a court order);
- Requirements of the *Personal Health Information Act* and the *Health Research Ethics Authority Act*;
- Monitor and manage public health risks by performing COVID-19 testing; and
- Fulfil other purposes, as permitted or required by law.

Avalon Labs will not use or disclose your personal health information without your consent except in limited circumstances where it is authorized to do so by law. We are committed to protecting your privacy and will critically consider the circumstances of each disclosure before disclosing your personal health information without your consent. Avalon Labs does not sell personal health information.

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Safeguarding Your Information

Avalon Labs has implemented physical, administrative, and technological safeguards to protect the personal health information in its custody and control against theft, loss and unauthorized access, use or disclosure. Means of protecting your information adopted by Avalon Labs include:

- Limiting access by staff to only those who have a need to use your information to perform the duties of their employment;
- Password-protecting electronic applications and information systems;
- Implementing firewalls and encryption where appropriate and necessary;
- Requiring the use of locked filing cabinets and secure premises;
- Developing procedures related to retaining your information, including minimum and maximum retention periods; and
- Ensuring that, when your information is no longer necessary for the purpose for which it was collected, it is destroyed, erased or de-identified effectively and securely.

Access to and Correction of Your Records

Under the *Personal Health Information Act* you have the right to request access to any records containing your personal health information. You also have the right to request a correction of your information where you believe a record is inaccurate or incomplete. Depending on the nature of your request, Avalon Labs may charge a fee to process your request. Avalon Labs will notify you in advance of any potential fees related to an access or correction request.

If you would like to request access to or correction of a record containing your personal health information in our custody or control, please submit a request in writing to Avalon Labs.

Questions or Concerns

If you have a question or concern about how Avalon Labs collects, uses, or discloses your personal health information, please contact our designated contact person. You also have the right to contact the Newfoundland and Labrador Information and Privacy Commissioner to discuss a concern you might have about our information handling practices. You can contact the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner as follows:

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner
2nd Floor, 34 Pippy Place
P.O. Box 13004, Station A
St. John's, NL A1B 3V8
Telephone: (709) 729-6500
Fax: 1-877-729-6309
Toll Free: (709) 729-6500
E-mail: commissioner@oipc.nl.ca