

MEC Privacy Code

At Mountain Equipment Co-op we understand that privacy is a critical issue for our members.

Our privacy code outlines our principles and procedures regarding the confidentiality and security of member personal information. This code is based on the requirements of the Federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), and provincial privacy legislation in the provinces in which MEC does business. MEC will continue to implement new technologies from time to time. As a result, this policy is subject to change without prior notice. We encourage you to review our privacy policy periodically.

This code outlines the principles MEC applies when protecting members' privacy. We believe that ensuring the accuracy, confidentiality, and security of the information we hold about members is more than simply a legal requirement; it is an ethical obligation.

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Scope

This code applies to MEC. It outlines the principles and commitments we make to our members, to protect the privacy of personal information.

This code does not apply to the information collected, used, or disclosed with respect to corporate or commercial entities that are members. However, MEC exercises the same care and diligence in protecting the confidentiality of this information.

Definitions

"MEC" - means Mountain Equipment Co-op.

"Collection" - the act of gathering, acquiring, or obtaining personal information from any source, including third parties, by any means.

"Consent" - involves voluntary agreement with what is being done or proposed. Consent may be expressed or implied. Express consent can be given orally or in writing, it is unequivocal, and does not require any inference on the part of MEC. Implied consent exists when MEC can reasonably infer consent based upon the action or inaction of the member.

"Member" - is any individual who joins MEC, or applies to join MEC.

"Disclosure" - the act of making personal information available to others outside of MEC.

"Use" - the treatment and handling of personal information by and within MEC.

"Personal Information" - information about an identifiable individual that is recorded in any form; excluding the individual's name, business title, business address and business phone number.

"Third-Party" - an individual or organization other than MEC and the member.

Section 1: MEC's Accountability

1.0 MEC is accountable for the protection of members' personal information. While senior management is ultimately accountable for the protection of personal information, the day-to-day monitoring for compliance may be delegated to other staff.

1.1 The overall responsibility for the protection of personal information, and compliance with this code, rests with MEC's Privacy Officer.

1.2 MEC is committed to ensuring that the appropriate security measures are employed in the transfer of sensitive information. However, when using e-mail or wireless communication, MEC advises members that complete confidentiality and security are not assured. MEC is not accountable for any damages suffered when a member transmits personal information through e-mail or wireless communication or when MEC transmits information at the request of the member.

1.3 MEC has developed policies and procedures to: protect personal information; receive and respond to complaints and inquiries; train staff regarding the policies and procedures; and communicate the policies and procedures to our members.

Section 2: Identifying the Purposes of Personal Information

2.0 MEC will communicate the purposes for which information is being collected, either orally or in writing.

2.1 MEC does not sell, rent, share, or loan our membership list. MEC collects member personal information for the following reasons:

- To provide retail services and process member purchases;
- To provide co-operative membership services;
- To administer corporate governance and share ownership;
- To understand the product and service needs of our members;
- To develop and manage products and services to meet the needs of our members;
- To contact our members directly for products and services that may be of interest;
- To determine the eligibility of our members for share ownership;
- To meet regulatory requirements;
- To ensure a high standard of service to our members;
- To verify a member's identity.

Member Purchases: When members purchase items from one of our stores (or through our catalogues or website) we only request the information needed to complete the processing of orders and billing.

- We may share our members' personal information with outside shipping companies and credit card processing companies in order to bill and ship orders, but we do not provide any more information than necessary for these purposes.
- We may also use the information to contact members regarding orders or to provide members with future information about our products and services.
- We use information on purchases to compile statistics and reports for Mountain Equipment Co-operative's use. However, the information in this format does not include any information that is personally identifiable.
- We analyse aggregated information to understand our membership and their needs, but this information cannot be used to identify any particular individual.

Co-op Membership: To become a member of MEC, you must provide certain information, which is added to our internal membership database, and which co-operatives must maintain by law (such as a valid legal name and address). While according to current law MEC must allow some access to the membership database to directors and members, the information contained in the database can only be viewed or used for corporate purposes pertaining to Mountain Equipment Co-operative.

Section 3: Member Consent

3.0 MEC will obtain member consent to collect, use, or disclose any personal information except where detailed in this code. MEC will make reasonable efforts to ensure that members understand how their personal information will be used and disclosed.

3.1 A member's consent can be express or implied, or given through an authorized representative such as a lawyer or agent. A member can withdraw consent at anytime, with certain exceptions (see section 3.3). Only under the following exceptional circumstances will MEC collect, use, or disclose personal information without the member's knowledge or consent:

- When such collection, use or disclosure is permitted or required by law*
- When use of information is for acting in an emergency that threatens an individual's life, health, or personal security
- When certain information is publicly available
- When we require legal advice from a lawyer
- When we need to deal with an anticipated breach of law.

***Fraud Prevention**

Mountain Equipment Co-operative reserves the right to co-operate with local, national, or international law enforcement or other authorities in the investigation of improper or unlawful activities and this may require the disclosure of personal information. If such an investigation requires disclosure of personal information kept in our records, we may be required by law to cooperate. We also reserve the right to report improper or unlawful user activities on our website, which may require the disclosure of personal information relating to those individuals conducting such improper or unlawful activities.

3.2 Consent may be given orally, in writing, or electronically. For example, depending on the sensitivity of the information, consent can be expressed over the telephone when information is being collected; electronically when submitting an agreement, application, or other information; in writing when signing an agreement or form; when using a product or service; or when indicating by means of a check-off box whether or not consent is granted.

3.3 Subject to contractual or legal arrangements, members may withdraw or refuse consent provided that MEC is given reasonable notice. Refusal or withdrawal of consent may prevent MEC from providing a product or service to the member as in the case where a member is applying for membership and will not provide relevant personal information required by law to process the membership share purchase. MEC will not unreasonably withhold products or services from members who refuse or withdraw consent, but if information is required by law or required to operate a consumer retail co-operative, MEC may decline to deal with a member or person who will not consent to the use of such information.

Section 4: Limits for Collecting Personal Information

4.0 MEC will only collect personal information for the purposes identified. MEC will use methods that are lawful and will not collect information indiscriminately.

Section 5: Limits for Using, Disclosing, and Keeping Personal Information

5.0 Personal information will only be used or disclosed for the purpose for which it was collected. MEC will not use personal information for any additional purpose unless MEC seeks member consent to do so.

5.1 MEC will not sell member lists or personal information to Third Parties. MEC will not share its member list with Third Parties (including any of our community partners).

5.2 MEC may periodically use member personal information to conduct member surveys in order to enhance our provision of member services. If an outside body is employed to conduct research on behalf of MEC, or provide

other services that require access to member information, MEC will ensure that appropriate security undertakings, such as confidentiality clauses in contractual arrangements, are employed to protect the transfer and use of personal information.

5.3 MEC will retain member personal information only as long as necessary or expected to be necessary for the identified purposes, or as required by legislation.

Section 6: Accuracy

6.0 MEC will make reasonable efforts to ensure that member personal information is as accurate, complete, and current as required for the purposes for which it was collected. In some cases, MEC relies on its members to ensure that certain information, such as the member's address or telephone number, is current, complete, and accurate.

6.2 Members may request amendments to the records at MEC in order to ensure the accuracy and completeness of their personal information. If the amendment request pertains to information that remains in dispute, MEC will note the member's opinion in the file.

Section 7: Safeguarding Personal Information

7.0 MEC is committed to the safekeeping of member personal information in order to prevent its loss, theft, unauthorized access, disclosure, duplication, use, or modification.

7.1 Depending on the sensitivity of the information, MEC will employ appropriate security measures to protect the information. The measures may include, for example, the physical security of offices and data centres, and electronic security measures such as passwords, encryption, and personal identification numbers.

7.2 MEC will use appropriate security measures when disposing of member personal information.

7.3 The development of MEC's policies and procedures for the protection of personal information is an ongoing process. Changes in technology necessitate that MEC continually develops, updates, and reviews information protection guidelines and controls to ensure ongoing information security.

Section 8: Availability of Policies and Procedures

8.0 MEC is open about the policies and procedures it uses to protect member personal information. Information about these policies and procedures will be made available to members either electronically or in written format in plain language. However, to ensure the integrity of our security procedures and business methods, MEC may refuse to publicly disclose certain information.

8.1 MEC will make the following information available:

- The name, title, and address of the person accountable for the policies and procedures and to whom complaints or inquiries can be forwarded;
- A description of the type of personal information held by MEC, including a general account of its use;
- A copy of any brochures or other information that explain the policies and procedures.

Section 9: Providing Member Access to Personal Information

9.0 Members have a right to access their personal information held by MEC. Upon request, MEC will, within a reasonable time period, tell the member what personal information it has, what it is being used for, and to whom it has been disclosed if applicable and within the time period for which records are available.

9.1 Members may be asked to be specific about the information they would like to access and, if necessary, be asked to submit their request in writing to the MEC Privacy Officer.

9.2 Members will be required to provide personal information to identify themselves to enable MEC to provide an account of the existence, use, and disclosure of personal information.

9.3 MEC will make the information available within 30 days, or provide written notice of extension where additional time is required to fulfil the request.

When information is not provided within 30 days of the request, MEC will, no later than 30 days after the date of the request, send a notice of extension to the member, advising of the new time limit, the reasons for extending the time limit, and of the right of the member to make a complaint to the Privacy Commissioner regarding the extension.

9.4 The information will be made available at a cost that will vary with the type and amount of information requested. Where a cost will be incurred by the member, MEC will inform the member of the cost and request further direction from the member on whether or not MEC should proceed with the request.

9.5 When reporting to members to whom their information has been disclosed, MEC will not document information transfers necessary for the daily provision of products and services to members. For example, transfers to organizations that process debit card purchases, cheque clearing, credit card transactions, and automated banking transactions will not be documented. Upon request, MEC will provide a list of organizations where member personal information may have been sent.

9.6 If a request is refused, MEC will notify the member in writing, documenting the reasons for refusal and resources for redress available to the member.

9.7 In certain situations, MEC may not be able to provide access to any or all personal information about a member. In such cases, MEC will explain the reasons it will not provide the requested information, and identify resources for recourse available to the member. The reasons for not providing information may include that it is unreasonably costly to provide, information that would threaten the life or security of another individual, information generated in a formal dispute resolution process, information that contains references to other individuals, information that cannot be disclosed for legal, security, or commercial proprietary reasons, and information that is subject to solicitor-client or litigation privilege.

9.8 If the information is demonstrated to be inaccurate or incomplete, MEC will amend the information as required. Where appropriate, MEC will transmit the amended information to Third Parties having access to the information in question.

Section 10: Compliance and Complaints

10.0 Members are to direct any complaints, concerns or questions regarding this privacy code in writing to the office of the MEC Privacy Officer. If the Privacy Officer is unable to address the member's concerns, the issue can be referred to the office of the CEO. At any point in this process the member may also write to the Privacy Commissioner.

10.1 Contact Information:

Attn: The MEC Privacy Officer
149 West 4th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 4A6

Tel: 604.707.3300
Email: privacy@mec.ca