

## Tip of the Month – February, 2011

### COMPLAIN TO THE DATA PROTECTION COMMISSIONER

There may be occasions where you are not satisfied with the response from a government agency or a private organization to your request to see or correct your personal information. We encourage you to first try to work out any disputes about your personal records directly with the agency, department or organization which holds your records. Here's how:

#### **1. Making a Formal Complaint**

Put your request in writing and address it to the person responsible: i.e. the "head" of the agency, department or organization.

#### **2. What to include in your letter?**

Relevant dates, places and times

A description of the incident or problem

Details of any telephone conversation and meetings

Any explanations you think are important

Copies of relevant documents

#### **3. Tell them what you need**

Explain what action you think should be taken to resolve the problem

Suggest that you are giving them a chance to fix the problem rather than fixing the blame

Invite cooperation rather than a defense

#### **4. Ask for Action**

Always request that your letter or telephone call be acknowledged in writing.

Ask for a timeframe when your complaint will be answered.

If the matter is urgent say so and explain why.

Be persistent but courteous.

#### **5. Keep Records**

It is important to keep copies of all letters you send or receive as well as details of all telephone calls. You may need these later on.

However, you also have the right to complain to the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner if for example.

You feel your personal information has been wrongfully collected, used or disclosed;

You were refused access to your personal information; or

You feel there was an unreasonable delay in getting to your information.

There is no charge to make a complaint and if you need our help please contact us by telephone (1-242-702-1552 or email us at [dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:dataprotection@bahamas.gov.bs))