

**RIGHT TO KNOW DAY 2022**

# “IN THE KNOW”

## **TRANSPARENCY | ACCOUNTABILITY | PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Freedom of Information keeps citizens “in the know” about their government. It increases government transparency and accountability, and allows people to understand the reasons for government policies and decisions.

If you are curious about an issue, ask for information about it!

01

### **WHAT CAN I REQUEST?**



The Freedom of Information Act gives you the right to ask for any government record. However, certain information may be withheld because it is exempt, for instance information about security, law enforcement or trade secrets. The government can also refuse to give you access if your request is vexatious or too big.

Personal information about someone else is protected by both the FOI Act and the Data Protection Act.



### **CAN GOVERNMENT CHARGE A FEE FOR A REQUEST?**

02

Government can charge you for the cost of searching for, reproducing and providing a record, but not for making a request. If you receive a fee estimate, you are entitled to ask for a fee waiver. There is no fee for accessing a record on the premises of the public authority.

Details of the fee schedule are available in the FOI Regulations.

03

### **CAN I MAKE AN ANONYMOUS REQUEST?**



You must provide a name when you make a request, but it does not have to be your real name. You will be asked to provide contact information (e.g. an email address), to allow the government to respond to your request.

If you make a request for your own personal information, you must give your real name and show proof of identity.



### **WHEN WILL I RECEIVE A RESPONSE TO MY FOI REQUEST?**

04

The government must acknowledge your request within 10 days and reply within 30 days. This period can be extended by a further 30 days for good cause. If the request has to be transferred to another public authority, the transfer should be made within 10 days.

05

### **WHAT CAN I EXPECT DURING THE INTERNAL REVIEW?**



If you are not satisfied with the initial response you received, you can ask for an internal review. In an internal review the Chief Officer or Principal Officer takes a fresh look at your request and the response you received. The internal review has to be done within 30 days, and this period cannot be extended.

If you don't get an internal review decision within 30 days, or are not satisfied with what it says, you can appeal to the Ombudsman.

