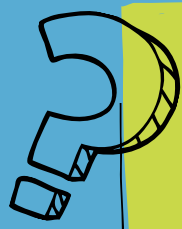


RIGHT TO KNOW DAY 2021

IT'S YOURS, JUST ASK!

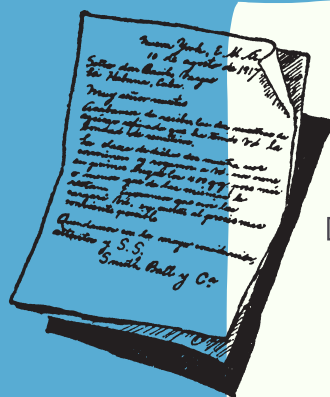
HOW TO MAKE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION WORK FOR YOU

Freedom of Information enhances government transparency. It allows people to understand the reasons for government policies and decisions. It also improves government accountability – if you are curious about an issue, ask for information about it! The information you receive will help you to participate more effectively in the democratic process.



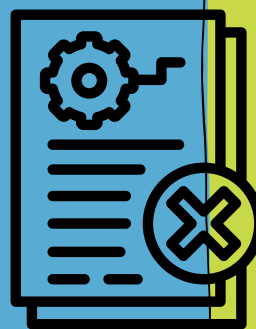
HOW DO I ASK FOR INFORMATION?

Prior to submitting a formal FOI request, contact the government and ask if the information is already available. Even if it isn't readily available, the government might agree to give it to you without requiring a formal application. If you don't get the information you want, you can make a formal request.



HOW DO I MAKE A FORMAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION?

Do some research so you know which government agency to ask. You will receive a faster response if you direct your queries to the right place. Make a written request as clearly and as specifically as possible, so government can understand what you are looking for.



CAN I ASK FOR ANYTHING?

Yes. However, be aware that the Freedom of Information Act allows for certain information to be withheld. For example, information about issues of national security, law enforcement & public safety, legal privilege and trade secrets are exempt from disclosure.

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

The government can refuse to disclose information if your request is too big or vexatious.



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY REQUEST?

If the government has any questions about your request, they will contact you to ask for clarification.

While we encourage government agencies to respond as soon as possible, they have 30 days to respond to your request. If they don't respond within 30 days, you can contact the Ombudsman for assistance.



WHAT IF I AM NOT SATISFIED WITH THE RESPONSE?

You can ask the government for an "internal review". This is the first step in the appeal process. A more senior person will review the decision to ensure it complies with the Freedom of Information Act.

If you aren't satisfied with the internal review decision, you can appeal it to the Ombudsman.

