



26 June 2015

Ms Olivia Grace-Curran

By email: foi+request-1091-91db7846@righttoknow.org.au

Our reference: LEX 14033

Dear Ms Grace-Curran

Your Freedom of Information request – Notification of charges

1. I refer to your request, dated 9 June 2015 and received by the Department of Human Services (the **department**) on the same date, in which you sought access to the following documents under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (**FOI Act**):

‘I respectfully request access under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 the total amount of Child Support arrears owed by paying parents in Australia. Please also itemize a breakdown of arrears in each state currently outstanding as of June 10th 2015.’

Liability to pay charges

2. In the departmental letter to you, dated 12 June 2015, we advised you that there is no charge payable for providing a person with their own personal information. You have requested non-personal information.

Preliminary Assessment of the Charge

3. At this stage, I am advised that the department has one documents (totalling two pages) relevant to your request, in its possession.
4. In accordance with section 29 of the FOI Act, I have decided that you are liable to pay a charge for the processing of your request. My preliminary assessment of that charge is \$14.50, calculated as follows:

Search and retrieval time: 0.92 hours at \$15.00 per hour	\$14.50
Decision making time: 3.20 hours at 20.00 per hour*	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$14.50

*The FOI Act provides that the first five hours of decision making time are free of charge and this is reflected in the calculation.

Required Action

5. If you would like the department to continue processing your request, you must notify the department in writing within 30 days of receiving this notice that you:
 - A. agree to pay the charge;
 - B. wish to contend that the charge:
 - i. has been wrongly assessed; or

- ii. should be reduced or not imposed; or
 - iii. both
 - C. withdraw your request.
6. If you do not provide a written response in accordance with one of options A, B or C within 30 days of receiving this notice, your request will be taken to have been withdrawn under subsection 29(2) of the FOI Act.
7. Alternatively you may wish to refine the scope of your request. Please contact the department if you would like to discuss this.
8. Further information on options A, B and C is set out below.

Option A – pay the charge

9. The amount due should be paid by cheque or money order made out to the Collector of Public Monies. Please quote reference number 'LEX 14033' with your payment.
10. Should you elect to pay the charge, please email send an email to foi.legal.team@humanservices.gov.au once you have posted your cheque or money order to advise us of your payment.
11. **Please note that paying that charge does not guarantee the receipt of unredacted material.**

Option B – seek reduction or non-imposition of the charge

12. You may contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed. Subsection 29(5) of the FOI Act provides that, in deciding whether to reduce or not to impose a charge, the decision maker must take into account any relevant reasons, including whether payment of the charge, or part of it, would cause you financial hardship, and whether the giving of access to the documents is in the general public interest or in the interest of a substantial section of the public.
13. If you wish to contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed or should be reduced or not imposed, please set out your reasons and the evidence in support of your reasons as clearly as possible. If you believe that payment of the charge would cause you financial hardship, please provide sufficient details of your financial circumstances to enable the decision maker to make a well-informed decision in this regard.

Option C – withdraw your request

14. If you wish to withdraw your request you may do so in writing by post or email. The department's address for correspondence is listed below.

Time limits for processing your request

15. Section 31 of the FOI Act provides that where a notice is sent to an applicant regarding the payment of a charge in respect of a request, the time limit for processing the request is suspended from the date the notice is received until either:
- (a) the day following payment of the charge (in full or the required deposit); or

- (b) if applicable, the day following the notification to the applicant of a decision not to impose the charge.

Address for correspondence

16. Please send all correspondence regarding your FOI request to following address:

FOI Team
Freedom of Information & Litigation Branch
Department of Human Services
PO Box 7788
CANBERRA ACT 2610

Or by email to foi.legal.team@humanservices.gov.au

Publication of information in the FOI disclosure log

17. Information released under the FOI Act may be published in a disclosure log on the department's website. Section 11C of the FOI Act requires this publication, subject to certain exceptions, including where publication of personal, business, professional or commercial information would be unreasonable.
18. Should you have any enquiries concerning this matter, please contact the department.

Yours sincerely

FOI Delegate
Freedom of Information & Litigation Branch
Legal Services Division
Department of Human Services