



Department of Health and Human Services

50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
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GPO Box 4057
Melbourne Victoria 3001
www.dhhs.vic.gov.au
DX 210081

Our ref: F16/0509

Ms Adi Berry
By email: foi+request1996a4b28be9@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Ms Berry

Freedom of Information Application

I refer to your application under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* requesting access to:

'I seek access to documents that outline details of child protection and child FIRST cases/reports that involved emotional abuse and/or neglect from 2005 onwards.

Details requested include the number of reports made per year, the nature of these reports and brief outlines of these reports (where possible), the demographics of these children and families, suburbs with the highest number of reports/cases, and the outcomes of these reports of emotional abuse and/or neglect cases.

I also request documents that outline the process of response by the CPS or Child FIRST involved in these cases of emotional abuse and/or neglect. All details requested are pertaining ONLY to cases of emotional abuse and/or neglect (not physical and/or sexual abuse).'

Your application was received on 10 June 2016. Your application fee was received on 24 June 2016.

In responding to your application, it is our policy to make preliminary enquiries to determine:

- if the department is in possession of the documents you are requesting
- how many documents are involved
- the effort required in retrieving and assessing the documents.

These enquiries may have several different outcomes.

- Your application can proceed towards resolution in its original form.
- Your application may require some form of clarification to proceed, for example, it may become apparent that an application does not comply with section 17(2) of the Act, which requires that the request should provide sufficient information for an officer to identify the subject documents. Please note that should your application be unclear in terms of section 17(2) of the Act, the statutory time period of 45 days does not commence until we have received an effective clarification from you.
- You may be required to vary your application in order to avoid refusal under section 25A of the Act. In particular, section 25A(1) of the Act states that the request may be refused if the work involved in processing the request would substantially and unreasonably divert the resources of the agency from its other operations.

Should either of these situations seem likely, I will contact you to discuss how refusal may be avoided.

When the documents you have requested have been identified you may be required to pay charges for access to the documents. The Act provides that if we are of the opinion that these access charges are likely to exceed \$50.00, you are to be notified of the calculated charge and required to pay a deposit if you choose to proceed with the request. Please note that if a deposit is required and you decide to proceed with your request, the statutory time period of 45 days does not commence until we have received your deposit. I will contact you if access charges are applicable to this request.

We endeavor to undertake these initial enquiries as quickly as possible, however in some situations they may take longer than anticipated.

I can be contacted at the address indicated in the letterhead of this letter, or via email at foi@dhhs.vic.gov.au or on (03) 9096 2004. Please quote our reference number (F16/0509) in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely



Stephanie Hamilton
Manager, Freedom of Information
People, Capability and Oversight

1 / 7 / 2016

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1. Fees and Charges Fact Sheet

Freedom of Information Fees and Charges

Factsheet

To make a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* you are required to pay an application fee and you may also be required to pay access charges.

Application fee

To ensure that your written request is valid it must be accompanied by an application fee of \$27.20 (effective 1 July 2015).

The \$27.20 application fee can be sent as a cheque or money order made payable to the Department of Health & Human Services. The application fee is GST free.

Can the application fee be waived?

The application fee may be waived if payment is likely to cause you hardship. If you wish to request to have the fee waived on these grounds you must provide a statement of how payment will cause you hardship.

A request is invalid and cannot be processed until:

- the application fee has been paid; or
- the department has agreed to waive the fee.

Access charges

An access charge may be applied under the Act for the costs involved in processing a request. Access charges are applied according to the nature of the request and could include:

- search time – charged at 1.5 fee units (\$20.40) per hour or part of an hour. Effective 1 July 2015, one fee unit is equal to \$13.60, therefore 1.5 fee units currently equates to \$20.40
- supervising an inspection of documents – charged at 1.5 fee units (\$20.40) per hour (to be calculated per quarter hour or part of a quarter hour)
- photocopying – 20 cents per page
- providing written transcripts of a recorded document – costs reasonably incurred.

Please note: The department provides an equitable service to all applicants, regardless of their financial resources.

Deposits

If access charges are estimated at more than \$50, you will be requested to pay a deposit. In this case the department will notify you in writing. Where the access charges payable in respect of your request are estimated at more than \$50, the Act provides that you may request to discuss practicable alternatives for altering your request or reducing the anticipated charge.

If you are requested to pay a deposit, you can then choose whether to:

- proceed with your request and pay the deposit
- request to discuss practicable alternatives for altering your request or reducing the anticipated charge
- withdraw your request.

Applications should be sent to:

Freedom of Information unit
Department of Health & Human Services
GPO Box 4057
Melbourne Victoria 3001

Need more information?

For further details about fees and charges, please feel free to contact the Freedom of Information unit directly on (03) 9096 8449 or 1300 650 172.

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone (03) 9096 8449, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email foi@dhhs.vic.gov.au

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