



Department of Health and Human Services

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

Dear Adi Berry

NOTICE OF DECISION FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

I refer to your application made pursuant to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* cited below and clarified in writing on 16 August 2016:

'I am requesting access to documents pertaining to both child protection and child FIRST services. My request is for documents that outline details of cases/reports that involved emotional abuse and/or neglect from 2010 onwards. The details that I request are as follows:

- 1. The number of reports made per year from 2010 onwards. Of the reports made, the number of them that were investigated, and the number of them that were substantiated.*
- 2. Reason/s why the report/case was made (concerns of the reporter/s) and whether the reporter was a mandatory reporter or not.*
- 3. Characteristics of the children who are the subject of these reports/cases: age, gender, nationality/ies, and location (suburb).*
- 4. List of suburbs and their corresponding number of reports/cases.*
- 5. Outcomes of these reports, e.g., no action taken, supervision order, out of home care, custody order, guardianship order.*

I also request documents that outline the steps that CPS and Child FIRST take to respond to reports once they have been received, e.g., check history of reported family, investigate and assess (risk of) harm, make application to court.

Please note that the information requested is only for reports that involve(d) emotional abuse and/or neglect.'

Freedom of Information Act 1982

The Act establishes a general right of access to documents held by the department. To protect essential public interests and the private and business affairs of individuals, the right of access does not apply to a document identified in the Act as exempt.

If a document contains exempt material the Act allows for an edited copy to be released after the exempt matter has been deleted and where it is practicable to do so.

Documents

On the basis of your request, the Community Services Programs and Design and Operations divisions conducted a thorough and diligent search and located two documents that are relevant to your request. The department's Child Protection practice manual contains information on the intake phase and a strategic framework for Family Services outlines Child FIRST's functions and purpose.

You have two options to access these two documents:

1. You can access them online at:
 - <http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/>
 - http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/588082/strategic-framework-for-family-services-2007.pdf ; or
2. You can access them under the Act by paying access charges.

The divisions also advised that no system contains the material covered by your request; therefore a summary document that meets item one to five of your request cannot be produced in accordance with section 19 of the Act.

Charges

In order for you to receive a copy of the documents under the Act you are required to pay access charges of \$35.00. These charges have been calculated on the basis of printing costs for 175 pages (\$35.00). You can make this payment by forwarding a cheque or money order made payable to the Department of Health and Human Services for the outstanding amount to this office. Upon receipt of payment the documents will be provided to you. Please note that access charges are GST-free.

Review rights

You can complain to the Freedom of Information Commissioner if you are dissatisfied with the way in which the request has been managed or in situations where documents do not exist or cannot be located.

The enclosed fact sheet contains more information about this process.

Yours sincerely



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

04 / 10/ 2016

Enc.

1. Fact Sheet – Freedom of Information Commissioner – Complaints

Freedom of Information Complaints

Factsheet

If you are not satisfied with the way that the department processed your freedom of information request, you may lodge a complaint with the Freedom of Information Commissioner (the Commissioner).

Types of Complaints

The Commissioner can investigate actions taken by agencies in processing requests.

Examples include:

- if the department advises you that the documents cannot be located or that the documents do not exist
- if you feel that the department's response to a freedom of information request has been unreasonably delayed beyond the statutory 45 day time period.

Timeframe for making a complaint

A complaint must be made within 60 days of the action or conduct which is the subject of the complaint.

How to make a complaint

Complaints must be made in writing and addressed to:

Freedom of Information Commissioner
Office of the Freedom of Information Commissioner
PO Box 24274
Melbourne Victoria 3001
Phone: 1300 842 364
enquiries@foicommissioner.vic.gov.au

Complaint application forms are available on the Commissioner's website: www.foicommissioner.vic.gov.au

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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