

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 \$28.40 (effective 1 July 2017).

The \$28.40 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 (\$21.33) per hour or part of an hour. Effective 1 July 2017, one fee unit is equal to \$14.22, therefore 1.5 fee units currently equates to \$21.33
- supervising an inspection of documents – charged at 1.5 fee units (\$21.33) 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 xxx@xxxx.xxx.xxx.xx

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