

Freedom of Information Fees and Charges

Factsheet

To make a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the Act) 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.

Review rights

If you are not satisfied with the department's refusal to waive the application fee, you have the right to seek a review of this decision by the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (the Commissioner).

Requests for review must be made in writing within 28 days of receiving the department's decision and addressed to:

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

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

Access charges

An access charge may be applied under the Act for the costs involved in processing a request. Access charges are set by the Freedom of Information (Access Charges) Regulations 2014 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 between \$50.00 and \$100.00, you will be requested to pay a deposit of \$25.00 before your request can be processed. Where the access charges payable for your request are estimated at more than \$100, the deposit amount will be 50% of the estimated charges.

You will be notified in writing of the estimate and given an opportunity to contact the department to discuss practicable alternatives for altering your request or reducing the anticipated charge. Please note, if a deposit is required the statutory time frame does not commence until the department has received the deposit.

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

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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