



13 February 2020

Our reference: LEX 50063

Ms Julie Middleton

Only by email: foi+request-6018-6b58e2c7@righttoknow.org.au

Dear Ms Middleton

Freedom of Information Request - Charges

I refer to your request dated 18 December 2019, and received by Services Australia (formerly Department of Human Services) on the same date for access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (FOI Act)* to the following documents:

- '1. User Guides (or similar instruction manual) for the Department's Compensation Management System that explains the process for recording, monitoring, reviewing and reporting compensation recovery information. The Compensation Recovery Team (CRT) uses the Compensation Management System and Service Officers in the service centres record information for compensation via the New Compensation and Damages Notification (Mod C) workflow, accessed through the Compensation Management System.
2. User Guides (or similar instruction manual) for the Department's Accounts Receivable computer software that records revenue received under the compensation recovery provisions of the Social Security Act 1991.
3. A process flow, instruction manual or similar document that explains the steps:
 - a) to ensure all compensation recovery payments are recorded in the correct General Ledger Account and with an applicable Cost Centre or Code Number.
 - b) to be used in the reconciliation process of matching the detailed amounts of revenue received from compensation recovery to the injured clients income support payments.
 - c) to be used for the reporting process where total revenue figures can be used for Centrelink's annual reports, auditing or any financial management purpose.'

Preliminary Assessment of the Charge

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 \$183.35 calculated as follows:

Search and retrieval time: 3.33 hours, at \$15.00 per hour:	\$ 49.95
Decision-making time (*after deduction of 5 hours): 6.67 hours, at \$20.00 per hour	\$133.40

TOTAL **\$183.35**

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

I am advised that Services Australia has documents relevant to your request and the above is the time spent to identify and process the documents in scope of your request under the FOI Act. On 20 December 2019 you provided:

'Please note that I do not agree to the Department providing my requested documents under administrative access arrangements and request that the Department proceed to process my request under the FOI Act.'

Please note that the payment of a charge does not guarantee access to the requested documents, in full or in part.

Required Action

If you would like Services Australia to continue processing your request, you must notify Services Australia 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;
 - ii. should be reduced or not imposed; or
 - iii. both

Alternatively, you may wish to withdraw your request for access.

If you do not provide a written response in accordance with one of options a) or b) above within 30 days of receiving this notice, your request will be taken to have been withdrawn under section 29(2) of the FOI Act.

Further information on options a) and b) are set out below.

Option a) - pay the charge

As the charge exceeds \$100.00, you are required to pay a deposit of 25% of \$183.35, being \$45.84, within 30 days of receiving this notice. You may, of course, elect to pay the charge in full at this point.

You may select from one of the following payment methods:

1. Online payment via Government EasyPay - follow [this link](#) and enter the relevant details. You will need your FOI LEX reference number, **LEX 50063**; or
2. Cheque made out to the Collector of Public Monies and posted to Freedom of Information, Services Australia, PO BOX 7820, Canberra BC, ACT 2610; or
3. Money order made out to the Collector of Public Monies and posted to Freedom of Information, Services Australia, PO BOX 7820, Canberra BC, ACT 2610.

If you elect to pay the charge, please email FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au to advise us of your payment. Please quote reference number **LEX 50063** in this correspondence.

Option b) - seek reduction or non-imposition of the charge

You may contend that the charge has been wrongly assessed, or should be reduced or not imposed. Section 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 or your organisation 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.

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 or your organisation financial hardship, please provide sufficient details of your financial circumstances to enable the decision-maker to make a well-informed decision in this regard.

Time limits for processing your request

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

Please send all correspondence regarding your FOI request to me at the following address:

Freedom of Information team
Services Australia
PO Box 7820
CANBERRA ACT 2610

Or by email to FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Publication of information in the FOI disclosure log

Information released under the FOI Act may be published in a disclosure log on Services Australia'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.

Further assistance

If you have any questions please email FOI.LEGAL.TEAM@servicesaustralia.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

Elsa

Authorised FOI Decision Maker

Freedom of Information Team

Employment Law and Freedom of Information Branch | Legal Services Division

Services Australia