



111.07240 - Managing Freedom of Information (FOI) files

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111.07240 Managing Freedom of Information (FOI) files - Overview

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This procedure aims to provide information on the creation, storage and handling of Freedom of Information (FOI) files by the FOI team.

An FOI file is made up of documentation relevant to the processing of FOI requests by the FOI team.

If a request for documents is made by a customer under the FOI provisions, the Customer Service Officer (CSO) must make a determination as to whether or not the request is deemed an informal or formal FOI request. If the request is:

- an informal FOI request, the ⁴ Informal Access process is appropriate and the CSO at a service centre can request the file or document directly from the Records Management Unit (RMU) via the Records management service request webform.
- a formal FOI request, the customer's written request must be sent to the FOI Processing team.

Extra contains links to the Records Management Units (RMUs) homepage, the Records Management service request webform and Mapstat.



Other related links

[Requests lodged under the Freedom of Information Act 1982](#)

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Procedure last issued 2014/06/16, see [Procedural Updates](#) and [Current Daily Updates](#) for details of major e-Reference updates.

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111.07241 Managing Freedom of Information (FOI) files - Detail


★ For Freedom of Information (FOI) officers

Click on the relevant link or scroll down to view all information.

 [Creating Freedom of Information \(FOI\) files](#)

 [What goes on an FOI file?](#)

 [Storing documents](#)

 [Storing and handling FOI files](#)

Category	Description
Creating Freedom of Information (FOI) files	<p>It is Centrelink policy to raise a separate file where appropriate when initially registering new FOI requests.</p> <p>Note: An FOI file is not raised where full access to documents relating to a personal injury claim is provided. In these cases, the request and documents are scanned into the Centrelink FOI database and the source documents are batch stored.</p> <p>FOI officers</p> <p>FOI officers register an FOI request on the FOI (business system) database.</p> <p>A daily report of all new FOI requests, that require an FOI corporate record to be created (including file cover) will be sent electronically to National Support Office Records Management Unit (RMU NSO) via the positional mailbox FOI.Records.</p> <p>RMU officers</p> <p>RMU NSO will register the file in HP TRIM Context (TRIM) on day one of the request or as soon as possible after FOI</p>

	<p>registration. They will create an action for the relevant RMU to create a new FOI file for each new request.</p> <p>The FOI file cover will be forwarded to the allocated FOI action officer and the file cover will be forwarded to them from their local RMU.</p> <p>All Freedom of Information files are registered with a TRIM title that includes the following metadata which is printed on a label attached to the front cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of <u>applicant</u> • FOI number • <u>Customer Reference Number (CRN)/AGS number (if available)</u> • Date of lodgement (if available) • Name of person whose documents are sought, where different from the applicant • Cull date information (to ensure that the TRIM record is marked with the correct sentencing information).
What goes on an FOI file?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOI request • Decision letter • Copies of documents that are subject to a decision under the FOI Act. • Copies of documents reflecting the deletions, where partial access to a document is provided. • Documentation supporting the FOI officer's decision.
Storing documents	<p>All FOI requests where full access is provided to documents relating to personal injury claims are digitised by FOI teams and the original source document batch stored.</p> <p>A cover sheet must be inserted in each batch folder as the first document. Details of any document retrieved from the batch must be recorded on the Centrelink system.</p>
Storing and handling FOI files	<p>A FOI file will usually reside in either a FOI Team or an RMU.</p> <p>FOI team</p> <p>Files should be retained by the processing officer for a period of eight weeks after finalisation of the case for any follow-up action, including appeals.</p> <p>Files may then be forwarded to the nearest RMU for storage.</p>

File assignees are responsible for the maintenance of the file while it is in their possession, including ensuring that any correspondence is attached in chronological order.

Note: FOI files are classified as 'Customer in Confidence' and are required to be handled within the provisions of Centrelink's Security Policy Manual. [Policy](#) contains a link to the manual.

File movement

The secure storage of the file, and its subsequent return to the RMU, remains the responsibility of the requesting officer for the period required. If the file is required by another officer, notify the RMU via the Records management service request webform. [Extra](#) contains a link to the form.

Access to files

Only FOI staff may request an FOI file. If an FOI file is requested by any other Centrelink employee, they must contact the FOI team via the positional mailbox - FOI.RECORDS@humanservices.gov.au.

FOI officers are responsible for advising the RMU of any transfer of files. The RMU staff will update the TRIM record to reflect who has possession of the FOI file.

FOI Cull date

FOI officers are responsible for recording the correct cull date on the FOI file. If no cull date is provided RMU staff are asked to contact the FOI decision maker for details.

If there are any changes to the cull date throughout the life of the FOI request, it is the responsibility of the FOI actioning officer to

- update the cull date prior to forwarding the file for storage and
- notify RMU staff about the changed cull date.

Once the file is received in the RMU it is the responsibility of the RMU staff to update the cull date appropriately on TRIM.


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111.07242 Managing Freedom of Information (FOI) files - Policy

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This page contains a link to the Centrelink Security Policy Manual. The link is not available to the public.

 [Centrelink Security Policy Manual](#)

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111.07243 Managing Freedom of Information (FOI) files - Extra

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This page contains links to the Records Management Units (RMUs) homepage, the Records management service request webform and Mapstat for the Freedom of Information (FOI) team contact details. These links are not available to the public.

[Records Management Units \(RMUs\)](#)[Records Management service request webform](#)[Mapstat FOI team](#)

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