

The relevant agency can also provide you with an application form.

Agencies cannot provide specific confidential information—for example, documents about certain law enforcement matters.

### **How long will it take to process my application?**

A government agency or Minister's office will process applications within five weeks, or 25 business days, but can take longer in some circumstances.

### **Will there be a cost?**

Documents containing only your personal information are free if you request them to be sent by email or CD.

An application fee will apply for applications that are not limited to access or amendment requests for personal information.

Providing the agency with as much detail as you can about the information you want may reduce this fee.

Additional charges may apply for processing the application and accessing documents, for example, searching and photocopying.

After you apply, the agency will provide you with a written estimate of the likely cost. You can also ask the relevant agency about fees and charges before applying.

If you hold a concession card, you may apply for a waiver of processing and access charges. However, this does not apply to the application fee.

### **Need more information?**

The customer services or RTI staff within the agency you want information from will be able to assist you.

OIC also provides general advice for the community on our website [www.oic.qld.gov.au](http://www.oic.qld.gov.au).

OIC's enquiries service provides general advice about how to obtain information from Queensland Government agencies. You can contact us Monday to Friday between 9:30am and 4pm, excluding public holidays.

Phone: (07) 3234 7373

Email: [enquiries@oic.qld.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oic.qld.gov.au)

# HOW TO ACCESS GOVERNMENT HELD INFORMATION

A guide for the community

## What is right to information?

The *Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)* (RTI Act) gives the public a right of access to information held by government agencies.

Agencies should, where possible, make it easy for the public to access information in places like their website or by releasing information administratively without a formal access application under the RTI Act.

*The RTI Act promotes more open, transparent and accountable government*

A formal access application for government-held information should only be made as a last resort. Agencies should have policies that encourage providing information when dealing with such requests.

## Which agencies can I access information from?

- Queensland Government agencies
- Ministers
- local government
- most Government-owned corporations
- public hospitals and health services
- public authorities like Workcover Queensland and Residential Tenancies Authority
- public universities.

## Where do I start?

### Step 1

Think about the type of information you want. Examples include reports, emails or personal records.

Gather as many details as you can. For example, knowing the date the agency created the document, or a reference number, could make it easier to find.

### Step 2

Check the agency's website to see if the information is already available. You may find the information under their 'publication scheme'.

An agency's publication scheme details their publicly available information including finances, services, decisions, policies and priorities.

An agency may provide access to information released under a previous RTI application. Agencies may list these under their website's disclosure log.

If you are looking for information held by a Minister's office and can't find their website, you can contact them via [www.parliament.qld.gov.au/members/current/list/current-ministers](http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/members/current/list/current-ministers).

### Step 3

If the information you want is not available online, or you don't have access to the internet, you can phone the relevant agency or the Queensland Government general enquiries line on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

They should direct you to someone that will know if the information is publicly available or if the agency can release it to you.

Provide as much detail about the information that you can. This will help staff search for what you need.

You should also ask if you can access the information through one of the agency's administrative access schemes.

## What if I don't get the information I want?

If you cannot access the information through the agency's administrative access scheme, you can submit a formal application under the RTI Act.

To access agency information, you can apply online at [www.rti.qld.gov.au](http://www.rti.qld.gov.au), or you can download an application form and apply directly to the relevant agency.