

Introduction to FOI

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) was introduced in 2000 to make public sector organisations more transparent and accountable to the public. The FOIA entitles anyone from anywhere in the world to access all types of recorded information and to receive a response within 20 working days.

How to make a request under FOI



Your request needs to be in writing (email/letter/fax) and you need to provide a contact address (this can be a postal or email address). It is

not necessary to say why you want the information. Please note, we cannot accept requests by telephone.

Tips for wording your request

- Your request should clearly set out the information you want and should be clear and specific so that we can deal with it as quickly as possible.
- If your request is not clear we may need to ask you to clarify the information you are looking for.
- Try to use phrases such as 'what' or 'how much' rather than open-ended questions such as 'why', and avoid mixing requests with opinions or complaints where possible.
- The Information Commissioner's Office website page How Can I Access Official Information provides some useful examples and can be found at this web address: www.ico.gov.uk/for_the_public/official_information/how_access.aspx

Information which may not be provided

The FOIA sets out limited circumstances in which we are allowed to withhold information. In some situations there may be documents (or parts of documents) which we are not able to provide. Examples include:

- where the information requested is commercially sensitive
- where we have a legal duty not to disclose the information
- where tender details have been requested during a tendering process

If we decide not to provide the information we will always give you details of how we reached our decision, together with details of your right to appeal our decision.



20 working days

We have 20 working days (from the day after we receive your request) to process your request for information. This time may be extended if:

- The information you have requested is subject to a fee being paid and we are awaiting payment.
- If we have asked for more information from you to help us locate or retrieve the information you have requested.

Fees

Generally, the information requested will be provided for free. However, if it will take a long time to gather and provide the information, we may make a charge in line with ICO guidance.

If we are going to make a charge we will always tell you in advance of providing the information to you and ask you to confirm whether you still wish to make your request. In some situations it might be possible to help you to rephrase your request so that it does not exceed the costs limit.



Data protection

If the information you are requesting is your own personal data (for example your medical records), you should make a subject access request under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). The Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not change your right to confidentiality - your personal information is still protected by the DPA and will not be shared with anyone who is not entitled to it. For more information about requests under the DPA please contact our Information Governance Manager via our switchboard on 01865 336800.

Freedom of Information



Making a request under the Freedom of Information Act

Useful websites



www.ico.gov.uk



www.justice.gov.uk



www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents

How to contact us

FOI Officer
NHS Oxfordshire
Jubilee House
5510 John Smith Drive
Oxford Business Park South
Oxford OX4 2LH
Tel: 01865 336800
Fax: 01865 337094

Email: xxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xx



Publication scheme

The publication scheme is a section of our website where we make information routinely available. It is always worth checking whether the information you are wanting to find out is already available in our publication scheme: <http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/about-us/how-the-pct-works/freedom-of-information/part-1.aspx>

Our publication scheme is currently being reviewed but the information is still accessible on our website.

If you would like a copy of this leaflet in Braille, large print, on audio cassette, or in other languages, please contact the FOI team

- by email at: xxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xx
- by telephone: 01865 334650 or 334641.