



# Can I get everything I want under FOI?

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The FOI Act creates a right of access (subject to some limitations) to documents held by State and local government agencies. But ...

- FOI is not ... for documents that are already publicly available for downloading, inspection or purchase, including on a government agency's website. Contact the relevant agency and ask if the documents you are seeking are already available to the public.
- FOI is not ... for documents held by individuals or private organisations. The WA FOI Act applies to documents held by WA State government agencies (including certain documents held by Ministers) and local governments (but not the Commonwealth).
- FOI is not ... to ask questions. The Act requires agencies to provide access to documents (subject to the limitations). If you are seeking answers to questions, you should consider contacting the agency outside the FOI process. Under FOI, your best approach is to request documents that you think may help answer your questions.
- FOI is not ... intended to be used to disclose sensitive personal or business information about third parties.
- FOI is not ... intended to prevent State and local government agencies from proactively making documents available to the public, or to individuals on a case-by-case basis.
- FOI is not ... a tool for agencies to prevent disclosure of documents because of embarrassment or unwelcome attention by the public.

If you have any general enquiries about the FOI process, please see our website or contact our office.

**Note:** This Information Sheet is intended as a general guide only and should not be viewed as legal advice. The Information Commissioner considers each complaint on its merits and according to the relevant circumstances.

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