



# What documents can I ask for?

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The FOI Act gives you a right to access documents held by State and local government agencies, subject to some limitations\*.

The type of government documents or records that can be requested extends to all manner of information, however recorded, in the possession or under the control of an agency.

Documents include (but are not limited to) maps, plans, diagrams, graphs, drawings, photographs, videos, audiotapes, CCTV footage and electronic records including emails (see definition of 'document' in the Glossary to the FOI Act).

**Note:** Your right under the FOI Act is to access documents, not to receive answers to questions.

**Tip:** If you are seeking documents, the best approach is to first talk with someone at the agency that holds the documents, as you may be able to access the documents without a formal application.

The access right under the FOI Act does not apply to documents that are already publicly available ([section 6](#)).

\* An agency can refuse access to documents, or certain information in them, if the information is exempt under the Act. There are a number of exemptions in the FOI Act. These include personal information about individuals other than you, certain business information and documents that are covered by legal professional privilege. For more information, see [The exemptions](#).

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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