

Freedom of Information Fact Sheet



Before you lodge a Freedom of Information request

Submitting a Freedom of Information (FOI) request should be your last option. You will not be able to use the FOI Act to access information that is already publicly available elsewhere (Section 14 of the FOI Act).

Unsure if the information may be available already? Please review our **Freedom of Information - Part II Statement** which can be viewed on our webpage [Freedom of information and public interest disclosures City of Darebin](#). The statement outlines a range of relevant information about FOI including our functions and decision-making powers, documents maintained and publicly available, subscriptions, mailing lists, libraries, advisory boards and committees, and the procedure for requesting access to documents held by us.

Council has also adopted a **Public Transparency Policy** which describes our approach to transparency, the kind of information we make available to the public, and how you can access it (see our [Public Register and information City of Darebin](#) webpage).

Any information that is required to be made publicly available, or that is available for purchase, can be provided to you directly.

If you still have questions, please contact the FOI team for further assistance prior to submitting a request.

If there's information you need that we haven't been able to provide, you are entitled to lodge a freedom of information (FOI) request. Your request for information will need to:

1. be in writing
2. be accompanied by your application fee (refer to fees and costs below)
3. clearly describe the documents you are requesting access to.

What to provide

1. **Description:** your request should accurately describe what you are seeking access to. Requests should be for specific documents. Avoid phrases like 'all documents in relation to' and 'including but not limited to'.
2. **Identification:** If the documentation you are seeking is about your own personal affairs, you'll need to provide evidence of your identity, such as a copy of your driver's licence.
3. **Authorisation:** If you are seeking the information on behalf of someone else - for example, if you are a legal firm - you'll need written authorisation.

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How to apply

You can lodge an FOI request using our online form available on our webpage, or by obtaining a printable form from Customer Service.

What happens after completing your application

We have 30 days from the date your request is received to issue a final decision. If consultation is required under the Act, this timeframe may be extended by an additional 15 days.

Under the FOI Act, we are obligated to consult with any individuals or businesses whose names appear in documents proposed for release. This consultation allows them to express their views on the disclosure of their personal and/or commercial information.

If an individual or business objects to the release of their information, and the FOI officer decides that the documents should be disclosed, a further 60 day waiting period applies. This period gives the objector time to lodge an appeal against the FOI officer's decision, as required by the Act.

What we can and can't provide

Not everything is able to be released under FOI. There are times when confidentiality rules may apply. For example, due to copyright laws, some documents (such as architectural plans) may only be available through inspection.

Fees and costs

Effective 1 July 2026, the standard FOI application fee is **\$34.50**. This fee may be waived or reduced if payment will cause hardship.

Where an application for access is granted, there may be costs in addition to the application fee. These charges are levied under the Freedom of Information (Access Charges) Regulations 2025 and relate to:

- search charges - **\$25.90** per hour or part of an hour
- inspection supervision charges - **\$25.90** per hour to be calculated per quarter hour or part of a quarter hour.

Where we anticipate that the costs will exceed \$70, we'll advise you as the applicant and request that you pay a deposit. You will be asked whether you want to continue with the request, or whether you wish to narrow the terms of your request to reduce costs.