**Freedom of Information – FOI**

How to access Zoos Victoria documents under FOI?

You can request access to documents held by Zoos Victoria by writing to the FOI Officer and including payment of the application fee.

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FOI Officer

PO Box 74

PARKVILLE VIC 3052



foi@zoo.org.au

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

How do I pay the FOI application fee?

Please refer to PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS below.

What are the fees?

An application fee applies. Access charges may also be payable if the document pool is large, and the search for material time consuming.

We will advise you if these charges are going to be more than $50 and ask you to pay a deposit if you want to continue with your request.

Please refer to FOI REQUEST FEES below.

What is a document?

Documents include those held in files or records and may consist of electronic mail messages in either paper or electronic format.

‘Document’ is broadly defined under the Freedom of Information Act and may include books, maps, plans, drawings, audio-visual media, photographs and documents that could be produced in discrete form by the use of a computer or other equipment (for example material stored in a database or spreadsheet).

Which documents are exempt under the Freedom of Information Act?

The Freedom of Information Act exempts some types of documents from access, including:

* documents containing information of a kind which is already available for public access (for example, publications)
* records created before 5 July 1978 other than documents which relate to the personal affairs of the applicant
* documents affecting the personal privacy of a third party
* internal working documents, including those documents that are a part of the deliberative processes involved in the functions of an agency, a minister or Government
* documents affecting legal proceedings
* documents relating to trade secrets, or other matters of a business, commercial or financial nature
* documents containing material obtained in confidence
* documents where disclosure would be contrary to the public interest.

How do I make a request?

If you ask for documents on behalf of another person about their personal affairs, we may ask you for a signed authority from that person.

If you ask for documents about your personal affairs, we may ask you to provide proof of your identity.

You need to clearly describe the documents you require so that we can locate them. Avoid phrases like "all documents about…[ a topic]”.

Please include a timeframe for your request.

How do we respond?

We aim to provide the cheapest and most accessible form of access to documents. We may refer you to the full range of information available in the public domain.

If your request is not clear or is too general, we may ask you to amend it so that it is well-defined or describes specific documents or a particular timeframe.

We will give you a decision about your request as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after it is received or after it is clarified, or after a deposit is paid unless the time is extended due to the consultation being required.

If we decide not to release some or all of the documents you want, we will give you reasons and tell you how to appeal.

We may suggest that you send your application to another agency, or transfer your request as appropriate.

Information Commissioner

You can request a review if you believe you have been unfairly denied access to documents. You may seek a review of Zoos Victoria’s decision with the Information Commissioner by writing within 28 days of receiving your decision letter to:

**Victorian Information Commissioner  
Freedom of Information Reviews**PO Box 24274  
Melbourne VIC 3001

[1300 842 364](tel:1300842364)  
[enquiries@ovic.vic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@ovic.vic.gov.au)

For more information about this process, refer to the [Victorian Information Commissioner website](http://www.ovic.vic.gov.au/).

**Payment Instructions**

Electronic Fund Transfer

Please remit the application fee or access charge to Zoos Victoria’s account as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Bank | ANZ |
| Bank Address | Collins Place Branch  55 Collins Street  Melbourne VIC 3000 |
| Branch Code (BSB) | 013-030 |
| Account Number | 2785 20668 |
| Account Name | Zoos Victoria |
|  |  |

To ensure we can identify the payment, please follow the instructions below:

1. The Reference must contain **FOI <name and surname of requester>and <entity name\*> (\* if applicable);** and
2. Please send an email to foi@zoo.org.au, notifying us of the payment.

Note: You can abbreviate your name, surname, and entity to fit the reference field.

If we can’t identify your payment, it will delay the processing of the FOI request.

Cheque Or Money Order

Cheque/Money Order should be made out to Zoos Victoria and posted to the below address. The payment should accompany the FOI Request.

FOI Officer

Zoos Victoria

PO BOX 74

Parkville VIC 3052

**FOI Request Fees**

These charges are set by the [*Freedom of Information (Access Charges) Regulations*](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubLawToday.nsf/b12e276826f7c27fca256de50022686b/ce75047bd150728aca2573fc0011d091!OpenDocument) *2014.*

There are two costs associated with making an FOI request:

* application fee
* access charges

The **application fee** is a fixed cost. The only exception is for people suffering hardship who can ask the agency to waive the application fee. Supporting evidence needs to be provided.

**Access charges** relate to the costs incurred in granting access to the documents that you have requested. These costs may or may not apply depending on the nature of your request. All fees are exempt from GST.

Application Fee

**Application fee – $30.10** (non-refundable unless the fee is waived)

Access Charges

### ****Search charges****

### **$22.55 per hour or part of an hour (1.5 fee units) Report production - The reasonable costs incurred by the agency in producing the report. Supervision charges (access by way of inspection) -** $22.55 (1.5 fee units) – pro-rata to each per quarter hour

* **Photocopying charges**

20c per black and white A4 page

* **Providing access in a form other than black and white A4 photocopying**

The reasonable costs incurred by the agency in providing the copy. Usually, the hourly rate of the officer undertaking the work.

* **Charge for listening to or viewing a tape**

The reasonable costs incurred by the agency in making arrangements to listen to or view. (Supervision charges also apply). Usually, the hourly rate of the officer undertaking the work.

* **Charge for making a written transcript out of tape**

The reasonable costs incurred by the agency in providing the written transcript. Usually, the hourly rate of the officer undertaking the work.