

## Freedom of Information

### 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.



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 the Application Form [below](#).

#### What are the fees?

Fees and charges are determined by the FOI Act and the Freedom of Information (Access Charges) Regulations 2014. A non-refundable statutory fee **\$31.80** (as of 1 July 2023) applies for all FOI requests. This fee is subject to an increase on 1 July every year.

The FOI Act allows us to charge, where reasonable, for access to documents. We will tell you if this applies and what the charges will be. Please note if you are asking for copies of your own personal documents, the application fee and access charges will not apply.

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.

If payment of the fee would cause you hardship, you can ask for it to be waived by providing evidence such as a photocopy of your current health care card.

Please note if you are asking for copies of your own personal documents, the application fee and access charges will not apply.

## Payment of Fees

We don't accept cash for the application or access fees.

Fees are payable to Zoos Victoria via Electronic Fund Transfer. Bank details will be provided if you email [foi@zoo.org.au](mailto:foi@zoo.org.au) with your FOI application. We will commence the FOI request when we received your payment.

## 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.

## Categories of documents

### **The types of documents that we create and maintain include**

- policies, procedures and standards
- briefings and reports
- registers
- correspondence
- applications, licences and permits
- meeting records
- financial records
- audio visual material

## Documents fall within the following categories:

- Corporate Administration
- Animal Management
- Wildlife Conservation and Science
- Experience and Learning
- Audits
- Finance
- Freedom Of Information
- Human Resources
- Incident and Emergency Management
- Insurance
- Information Technology
- Legal
- Media Relations
- Publications
- Travel

The above examples are not an exhaustive list and only provide a snapshot of information available.

## 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  
enquiries@ovic.vic.gov.au

For more information about this process, refer to the [Victorian Information Commissioner website](#).