**REEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST**

Request for access to documents under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Vic) (**FOI Act**) gives you the right to request access to documents held by Victorian public sector agencies and Ministers. Certain information may be exempt from disclosure. This means you may not be able to access all of the information you would like.

**Making a request**

Before making a request, check if the information you are seeking is already publicly available on our [website](https://wgcma.vic.gov.au/). Under section 17 of the FOI Act, a request must meet three requirements to be valid:

1. your request must be in writing;

2. you must provide sufficient information about the documents you are requesting so the agency or Minister you send your request to can identify and locate relevant documents; and

3. you must pay the application fee, or if payment of the application fee would cause you hardship you can request the agency or Minister to waive the fee in full or in part.

Requests for documents in possession of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority (WGCMA) can be directed to:

Lucy Laurie-Rhodes, FOI Officer

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority

PO Box 1374, Traralgon VIC 3844

Enquiries can be made to the Authority’s FOI officer via email at [lucyl@wgcma.vic.gov.au](mailto:lucyl@wgcma.vic.gov.au)

For more information on making a request for documents, visit the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner’s (OVIC) [website](http://www.ovic.vic.gov.au/).

**After you submit a request**

After you submit a request we will assess it to ensure it meets the requirements outlined in section 17 of the FOI Act. If we determine your request is not valid, we will notify you within 21 days from the date we received your request and provide you with assistance to help you make the request valid. If your request is valid, we will begin processing it.

**Timeframes**

WGCMA has 30 days from the date you make a valid request to provide you with a decision. We can extend this time by up to 15 days if we need to consult with third parties whose information may be contained in the requested document(s). We may also extend this time by up to 30 days with your agreement. WGCMA will let you know if the timeframe changes.

**Fees and charges**

The charges applicable for processing an FOI request are fixed in accordance with regulations made under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic). The application fee is set each year from 1 July each year and can be found [here](https://ovic.vic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/for-the-public/find-and-request-access-to-information/). This fee is reviewed annually. Payment can be made by cheque or money order made out to West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority. Please contact the FOI Officer to make payment by bank transfer.

In addition to the application fee, certain charges for searching and providing access to the documents may be payable. These charges are calculated in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Access Charges) Regulations 2014 (Vic). If search and/or access charges are expected to exceed $50, WGCMA will provide an estimate of the charges and request a deposit be paid before the request is processed. At this time we will also seek confirmation of whether you would like to proceed with the request, or amend the request to reduce the anticipated charges.

**Privacy and Collection Notice**

If you use this form, your personal information will be collected and used by the agency or Minister for the purpose of processing your request. This may include disclosing your name and the terms of your request to staff to undertake document searches, third parties for the purpose of consultation and the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner (OVIC) in the event of a review or complaint. Your request may also be transferred to another agency or Minister who is better placed to handle it. WGCMA manages your personal information in accordance with its Privacy Policy and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic).

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|  | **Are you making this request on someone’s behalf or as a representative?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | | For example, you are someone’s lawyer or advocate. |
|  |  | No – Skip to question 3. | |
|  |  | Yes – Continue to question 2. | |

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|  | **Who do you represent?** | | | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | These are the details of the person you are acting for or represent. | | | |
|  | Title: | | Click or tap here to enter text. | | |
|  | First Name: | | Click or tap here to enter text. | | |
|  | Last Name: | | Click or tap here to enter text. | | |
|  | Organisation (if applicable): | | | | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Your relationship: | | | Click or tap here to enter text. | |

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|  | **What is your name?** | | |
|  | Title: | Click or tap here to enter text. | |
|  | First Name: | Click or tap here to enter text. | |
|  | Last Name: | Click or tap here to enter text. | |
|  | Organisation (if applicable): | | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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|  | **How can we contact you?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | Please provide a phone number and either an email or postal address. | |
|  | Phone: | | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Email: | | Click or tap here to enter text. |
|  | Post: | | Click or tap here to enter text. |

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|  | **If you are requesting personal information, can you provide proof of identity or authorisation?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | | Your identity may need to be verified before personal information can be released to you. |
|  |  | Yes – I have attached a copy of an identity document like a driver’s licence, or if acting on someone’s behalf, I have attached an Authority to Act and a copy of their identity documents. | |
|  |  | No – Contact me if this is required. | |

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|  | **Are you requesting the application fee to be waived or reduced due to hardship?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | | You must pay an application fee for your request to be valid. |
|  |  | No – I have included a cheque/money order or paid by bank transfer the application fee. Amount paid:……………………. Date:……/………/……… Ref No………………………. | |
|  |  | Yes – I have attached evidence of hardship, for example a copy of a Centrelink card. | |

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|  | **How would you prefer to receive any documents that are located?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | | Your preference will be considered but access may be provided in another way. |
|  |  | Send a digital copy of the documents to the email address I have listed. | |
|  |  | Send a hard copy of the documents to the postal address I have listed. | |
|  |  | I want to inspect the documents at the agency’s office. | |
|  |  | Contact me to discuss other options. | |

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|  | **Can information or documents be excluded if it isn’t needed?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | | Excluding information you don’t need may assist with your request being processed more efficiently. |
|  |  | Personal information of other people can be excluded from the documents. | |
|  |  | Duplicate documents can be excluded. | |
|  |  | Draft documents can be excluded. | |

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|  | **Can the documents be edited to remove exempt and irrelevant information?** | | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | | Under section 25 of the FOI Act, to access documents with exempt and irrelevant information edited out you must indicate if you will accept edited copies of the documents. If you don’t agree to receive edited copies, the agency can exempt and refuse access to the documents in full, even if there is some information that could be released to you. |
|  |  | I agree to receiving edited documents. | |
|  |  | I don’t not agree to receiving edited documents. | |

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|  | **What are the documents you are requesting?** | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | Identify or describe the documents you want. You need to provide enough information for the agency to identify and locate the documents. You should try to be specific about the documents you want and include as much information as possible. Contact the agency and ask for help if you are unsure.  Try to include information like:   * What is the name of the document? * What do the documents relate to (for example, a complaint you made, an interaction you had with an agency, or a decision that an agency made about a project or issue)? * When were the documents created (for example, is there a specific day or date range)? * Do you know where the documents might be located (for example, in a particular email account, with a specific person, or held by a business or work unit)? * What format are the documents in, or what types of documents are you requesting (for example, an email, report, CCTV footage)? |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. | |

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|  | **Is there any additional information you can provide?** | |
|  | Comment Important with solid fill | Providing background or contextual information might assist the agency in processing your request. This could include your reasons for requesting the documents and what you intend to do with them. Providing additional information may assist the agency to identify and locate documents relevant to your request. |
|  | Click or tap here to enter text. | |

