

# Requesting Information from OSFC Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Office of the Social Fund Commissioner (OSFC) routinely publishes much of the information it holds under its [publication scheme](#). However, from 1 January 2005 the Act allows anyone to request any recorded information held by OSFC. This guide explains how you can request information under the Act, and how your request will be handled.

## Who can request information?

From 1 January 2005 anyone can request information under the Act, regardless of age, nationality, or location.

## What information can be requested?

You can request any recorded information held by OSFC. However, there are a number of exemptions, which may be applied in order to protect information properly kept confidential.

## How do I make a request?

The Act requires that your request should:

- Be made in writing (this includes e-mails)
- State your name and an address for correspondence
- State clearly what information is required.

Please direct your requests to: The Publication Scheme Co-ordinator

Postal Address: Office of the Social Fund Commissioner  
Scottish Amicable Building  
11 Donegall Square South  
Belfast  
BT1 5JE

Fax Number: 028 90230921

E-mail: [sfc@osfcni.org.uk](mailto:sfc@osfcni.org.uk)

If you need help in making your written request, for example, help to state clearly what information you want, please direct your request for help to The Publication Scheme Co-ordinator, who may be contacted as above, or by telephone on 028 90247202.

## What happens if my request is unclear?

If it is not clear what information you require we will contact you to try to clarify what information you want.

## **What does it cost?**

Regulations allow us to charge a fee for providing information. If we decide to charge a fee, we will let you know the cost. The relevant information will be provided once payment has been received.

## **What happens once I have made my request?**

OSFC will tell you whether we hold the information you have requested and if so we will supply you with the information, unless we decide that an exemption applies.

If we decide that the information you want is exempt information we will explain why.

We will respond to requests for information as soon as possible, and usually not later than 20 working days after receiving your request.

(If a fee is required, or if we need more information in order to handle your request, the 20 working days will not start to run until that fee or that information has been received.)

In certain cases where we need to consider if an exemption applies we may require more than 20 working days. If this is the case we will give you an estimate of how long our response will take.

## **In what format will information be supplied?**

You can ask for information in any format. For example, you can request information in permanent or summary form, or you can ask to inspect records. In deciding what format to use we will consider what is reasonably practicable, and we may take account of the cost of supplying the information in particular formats.

## **Can I ask for a review of a decision to refuse to provide information?**

If you are unhappy with the decision we have made in response to your request, you may ask us for an internal review.

Requests for a review should be made in writing and sent to: The Publication Scheme Co-ordinator

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Scottish Amicable Building  
11 Donegall Square South  
Belfast  
BT1 5JE

Fax Number: 028 90230921

E-mail: [sfc@osfcni.org.uk](mailto:sfc@osfcni.org.uk)

We aim to respond to requests for a review within 20 working days.

If following our review decision you are still unhappy, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, whose contact details are as follows:

Postal Address: Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Fax Number: 01625 524 510

**What will we do if we do not hold the information you have requested?**

If we do not hold the information you have requested we will inform you of this. If we are aware that another public body holds the information you have requested we may refer your request to them. If you do not wish your request to be passed to a third party please tell us this when you first make a request for information.

**Further information**

Further information about the rights and duties conferred by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 can be obtained at: [www.foi.gov.uk](http://www.foi.gov.uk) and [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk).