

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Overview

The purpose of the Freedom of Information Act is to ensure that all persons are entitled to full and complete information regarding the affairs of government, and the official acts and policies of those who represent them as public officials.

The principle mandate of the Act provides that each public body shall make available to any person for inspection, or upon submission of a written request, to provide copies of any requested records that are subject to disclosure under the Act. Not all records are subject to disclosure, and the Act provides a number of exemptions.

This Act is not intended to be used to violate individual privacy, nor for the purpose of furthering a commercial enterprise, or to disrupt the duly-undertaken work of any public body independent of the fulfillment of any of the rights of the people to access to information (5 ILCS 140/1).

For black and white, letter or legal sized copies, the first 50 pages are free, unless a different fee is otherwise fixed by statute. Any additional pages will be charged at .15 cents per page. Color and abnormal size copies will be charged the actual cost of copying.

All written requests shall be responded to within five (5) working days (5 ILCS/140/3). The five (5) day count begins the day after the receipt of the FOIA request by the Department Head, or designee. The requester may be notified of a five (5) day extension (working days) if the files are voluminous, at different locations, or if other reasons make it impossible to assemble and mail the request out within the normal five (5) day period.