

Roles and Responsibilities for Processing FOI Requests

The processing of FOI requests is a shared responsibility between IAO and its client ministries. The respective roles and responsibilities for this process are assigned to the parties that are best-positioned to undertake them; i.e.:

- IAO is the client ministries' service provider to FOI applicants. IAO holds the expert knowledge of the FOI Act and how it can be applied in various situations, and provides advice and recommendations to client ministries regarding same.
- IAO provides weekly FOI management reports and weekly conference calls to client ministries, and coordinates client responses to reviews and complaints from applicants.
- Client ministries have custody and/or control of the records, and are the subject matter experts of same. They are best-positioned to determine whether their records are responsive to applicants' requests, and whether release of information in those records will result in harms. Client ministries approve the application of FOI exceptions to disclosure based on recommendations from IAO, and they approve the release of records to applicants.
- It is assumed that both parties will make the best use of available technology to streamline the process.

1. INTAKE – IAO (1 TO 2 DAYS)

- Determine if there is sufficient information to open request. If not gather more information from requestor and/or Ministry
- Log request in and open file
- Assign request to appropriate team
- Analyst to issue Call for Records and Fee Estimate to client ministry contact

2. RECORD GATHERING – Ministry (10 TO 12 DAYS)

- If search and retrieval time is anticipated to exceed 3 hours and/or the total volume of records exceeds 200 pages, complete Fee Estimate and email it to IAO Analyst ASAP
- If request proceeds, locate all responsive records, and send them electronically to IAO Analyst in the standard format set by IAO or load them to the shared drive
- The program area provides recommendations/harms assessment and views on publication on the Open Information website
- The records must be clean (no marks, stickies or blacked out information). If the program area wishes to mark the records to indicate harms, provide an additional clean copy of the records
- The program area should review the records for duplicates, blank pages and non-responsive information and remove said items
- Where information revealing Cabinet/Treasury Board confidences is identified, provide information required by Premier's Office to IAO Analyst (ideally with the records and harms assessment)
- Notify GCPE contact, if there will be issues

3. REVIEW & ANALYSIS – IAO (10 DAYS)

- Issue fee estimate to applicant where applicable
- Analyze and provide recommendations to ministry client on any fee waiver requests
- Initiate and process any necessary consultations or third party notifications
- Review responsive records and harms assessments provided by client, and consultation responses where applicable
- Determine if records meet any of the criteria for exemption from publication on the Open Information website
- Determine appropriate severing recommendations and prepare sign-off package for client ministry
- Apply for OIPC extensions where warranted
- Analyst to email sign-off package to sign-off contact in client ministry

4. APPROVAL – Client Ministry (6 DAYS)

- Manage ministry internal review and sign-off process
- Route sign-off package through appropriate parties determined by client ministry, obtain approval signature from ministry's delegated FOI approval authority
- Notify GCPE contact of issues, where applicable
- Email completed sign-off package back to IAO Analyst

5. RELEASE – IAO (1-2 DAYS)

- Finalize release package
- Issue response to applicant
- Close file

5. POST TO OPEN INFORMATION– IAO (AS PER SCHEDULE IN THE POLICY)

- Post to Open Information website, where not exempt from publication

IAO's Resource FOI Team

- Please contact any one of the members below for all of your FOI needs. If you have questions about a specific file it is best to start with the analyst assigned to the request (stated on the call for records form):

Kris Ghag, Manager
Gerry Edwards, Team Lead
Jamie Onciul-Omelus, Team Lead

John Wilson, Senior Analyst
Rhiannon Hamdi, Senior Analyst
Sylvia Love, Senior Analyst
Krisna Phosy, Analyst
Liane Shott, A/Analyst
Debra Graves, A/Junior Analyst
Vacant, Clerk