

Customer Service Guide 109 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Last Updated: February 2021

What is the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*?

The act gives you a right to ask public-sector organizations in Ontario for information they hold. It applies to the Government of Ontario and certain other public institutions.

The purpose of the act is to provide a right of access to information under the control of these institutions, and to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information held by these institutions.

How does the act affect access to records in the Archives of Ontario collection?

There are exceptions to this general right of access. The act sets out what information an institution must refuse to disclose and what information it is permitted to decide whether to disclose.

Many of the government records in the Archives of Ontario collections must be reviewed with consideration to these requirements of the act.

How will I know if the records I want to access in the Archives of Ontario collections are subject to review under the act?

Check the status of the records that you want to access in the “Restrictions on Access” section of the record series description.

For example, you will have to submit a Freedom of Information request if it says: “Access to these records is governed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.”

Most series descriptions are available online in the Archives Descriptive Database, located in the [Access Our Collections](#) section of our website. For assistance, contact a Reference Archivist. Contact information is available at the end of this guide.

What information do I provide when making a Freedom of Information request to access records in the Archives of Ontario collections?

Be as specific as possible when identifying the records you are requesting to access.

If you are looking at a specific record series that has a file list, provide the reference code (RG number), container number, and the file number/name.

Example: RG 1-568, B162753, Anicinabe Park.

It may be that the record series does not have a file list. In that case, provide the reference code (RG number) and any relevant information about the subject you are researching.

Remember to provide your contact information, including an email address.

For assistance, contact a Reference Archivist.

How do I make a Freedom of Information request?

A request can be submitted online or by mail.

1. Online

Use the Access or Correction Request (Online) form to submit the request with the mandatory \$5.00 application fee. [Click here to access the Access or Correction \(Online\) form.](#)

2. By mail

Write a letter or complete and mail us the Access or Correction Request (Mail-in) form. [Click here to access the Access or Correction \(Mail-in\) form.](#)

Send with the mandatory \$5.00 application fee (cheque or money order in Canadian funds made payable to the **Minister of Finance**) to:

Information and Privacy Unit
Archives of Ontario
134 Ian Macdonald Blvd
Toronto ON M7A 2C5

Where can I get more information about making a Freedom of Information request?

For more information about Freedom of Information requests, [click here to access the How to make a Freedom of Information request webpage](#). Included on this page is a link to the Access or Correction Request forms.

What happens after I submit a Freedom of Information request?

An institution is required to respond within 30 calendar days after a request is received.

The Information and Privacy Unit at the Archives of Ontario will review the records to determine if they can be disclosed and will respond to you in writing. It may be to inform you of the outcome of the review, to extend the time limit to complete the request, or to advise you of processing fees.

You can contact the Information and Privacy Unit by email at: archivesfoi@ontario.ca if you have questions about your request.

Further Information?

[Click here to access the act on the Ontario e-laws website](#). You can also access a print copy from our Library. [Click here to access the Archives of Ontario Library catalogue](#).

Contact us

Telephone: 416-327-1600 Toll free (Ontario): 1-800-668-9933

Email: [Click here to email the Archives of Ontario](#). The e-mail address is reference@ontario.ca

Address: Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd., Toronto, ON M7A 2C5

Website

Visit our website for information about our collections and our services, our online exhibits and education programs, and links to our social media accounts. [Click here to visit our website](#). The website is www.ontario.ca/archives.

Customer Service and Research Guides

Our guides contain information about our services, freelance researchers available to do research for you, and some of most popular records. [Click here to view our guides](#). To find the “Research Guides and Tools” on our website, click on [Access Our Collections](#).

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