

Request for documents form: section 17

Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

Under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)* (**FOI Act**), every person has the right to request access to documents held by Victorian public sector agencies and Ministers. This right of access is subject to exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public and private interests.

Making a valid request

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 Barwon Water 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 Barwon Water to waive the fee in full or in part.

After you submit a request

After you submit a request, we shall 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 it received your request and provide you with assistance to help you make the request valid. If your request is valid, Barwon Water will begin processing it.

Timeframes

Barwon Water has 30 days from the date you make a valid request to provide you with a decision. However, 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). It may also extend this time by up to 30 days with your agreement. Barwon Water will let you know if the timeframe changes.

Other charges

Barwon Water may require you to pay certain charges before access is provided to the requested document(s). For example, Barwon Water may charge for providing copies of the document(s) or supervising an inspection of the document(s). If these charges exceed \$50.00, Barwon Water will notify you and request that you pay a deposit before proceeding with your request.

How your personal information may be handled

By submitting this form, you are providing your personal information to Barwon Water. Your personal information will be used for the purpose of processing your request. Barwon Water may consult with third parties in considering whether an exemption under sections 29, 31, 31A, 33, 34 or 35 of the FOI Act applies. This may involve disclosing details such as your name, the terms of your request, and the documents falling within the scope of your request that concern the relevant third parties.

If necessary, we may transfer your request under section 18 of the FOI Act to another agency or Minister who is better placed to handle your request. If this is the case, we shall inform you of the transfer.

You should contact Barwon Water directly and discuss if you have any concerns about how we may handle your personal information.

1. Contact details

Your details

Title: _____ First Name(s): _____ Surname: _____
Organisation (if applicable): _____
Email address: _____
Contact number(s): _____
Postal address: _____
Suburb: _____ State/Territory: _____ Postcode: _____
Preferred contact method: _____
Do you need an interpreter? _____ If yes, what language? _____

Details of your representative (if applicable)

If you are using a representative like a parent, guardian, lawyer or any other person who is acting on your behalf, please advise who they are. If you are completing this form as the applicant's representative, advise who you are.

Title: _____ First Name(s): _____ Surname: _____
Organisation (if applicable): _____
Email address: _____
Contact number(s): _____
Postal address: _____
Suburb: _____ State/Territory: _____ Postcode: _____
Preferred contact method: _____
Relationship to applicant: _____

Your authority for representative to act (if applicable)

Please complete this section if a representative is assisting you with your request and attach a certified copy of your photo identification with this authority to act.

I give permission and authorisation for my representative to act on my behalf and have access to any information concerning my request.

Applicant	Representative
Name: _____	Name: _____
Signature: _____	Signature: _____
Date: _____	Date: _____
Witness	Witness
Name: _____	Name: _____
Signature: _____	Signature: _____

2. The documents you are requesting access to

Please identify, describe or outline the document(s) you are seeking access to.

Your request must provide sufficient information for Barwon Water to identify and locate all relevant document(s). When writing your request, be specific about which document(s) you are seeking and include as much information as possible. Think about:

- what the document(s) relate to (for example, a complaint you made, or a particular project);
- the date range in which the document(s) may have been created;
- where the document(s) might be located (for example, in a particular email account, with a specific person, or held by a business or work unit); and
- the type of document(s) you seek (for example, an email, report, CCTV footage).

Please avoid using wording such as ‘all documents’ because your request may end up being too large for us to process, or it may not be specific enough to identify the document(s). If you are not sure how to frame your request please contact us.

3. Additional information to assist Barwon Water

Optional: please provide background or contextual information to assist us in processing your request. This could include your reasons for seeking access to the document(s) and what you intend to do with the document(s). Providing additional information may assist us to identify and locate document(s) relevant to your request. It may also assist us to identify other ways you may access the requested document(s) outside of the FOI Act.

4. Excluding documents or information you don't need

It is helpful to exclude certain documents or information from your request if it isn't particularly necessary or relevant. This may allow us to process your request more quickly by potentially reducing the number of documents to assess or removing the requirement for them to consult with third parties.

Do you require access to:

- final documents only: Yes / No
- commercial information relating to third parties: Yes / No
- personal information relating to third parties: Yes / No

5. Proof of identification

If the documents you are seeking access to relate to you personally, you may need to provide Barwon Water with a certified copy of your identification. Barwon Water may not be able to provide access to the requested document(s) if it cannot verify that you are the person the subject of the document(s).

6. Edited copies

The document(s) you seek may contain exempt or irrelevant information. Under section 25 of the FOI Act, Barwon Water can provide edited copies of document(s) with exempt or irrelevant information removed. However, Barwon Water is only required to do this if you indicate you will accept an edited copy of the document(s), and if it is practicable for Barwon Water to make edits. If you don't agree to receive an edited copy, Barwon Water may decide the entire document is exempt and refuse access to it in full, even if there is some information that could be released to you.

I agree / I do not agree - to receive access to a copy of a document with exempt or irrelevant information removed in accordance with section 25 of the FOI Act.