

## Freedom Of Information Request

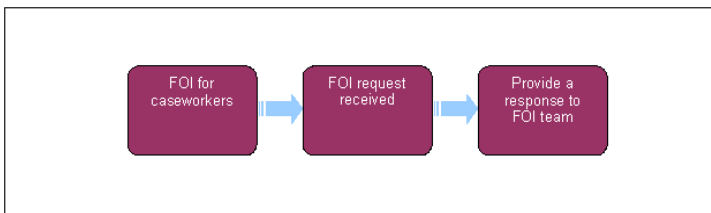
The Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 gives any person the right to access information held by a public authority. Requests are specifically dealt with by members of the FOI Act team.

Further information about the Act can be found on the Gov.Uk website and the DWP Intranet.

The Government wants to be open about how public services are run and how much it costs to run them. Anybody, whether an individual or corporate body such as a private company, can apply to have access to any recorded information held by the CMG.

There is no formal application procedure although requests must be in writing, by letter or email and include a full name and a postal or email address to respond to. There is no need for the person making the application to mention the Act in the written correspondence. If the information is held, it is released subject to certain exemptions.

For more information refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance. 




### Freedom of Information for caseworkers

1. If a customer wishes to make a request under the FOI Act:

- Advise customers that FOI requests can only be carried out by the FOI team
- Find out what information is wanted:
  - Personal requests; for information directly relating to their case would be handled under the Data Protection Act (DPA). For more information refer to [Subject Access Request \(SAR\)](#). For more information about data protection refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance .
  - Routine requests; for information that can be dealt with as a matter of course including leaflets/documents produced by Child Maintenance Options or the Child Maintenance Group (CMG). These do not need sending to the FOI team and should be dealt with as routine correspondence.
  - Complex requests include; issues that have a high public profile or may involve consultation with other areas of the organisation or the writer asks for information under the FOI Act. These requests must be made to CMG PQ FOI Correspondence ([PQFOI.CORRESPONDENCE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:PQFOI.CORRESPONDENCE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK))
  - Advise the customer they will need to send the request in writing by post to:
 

Child Maintenance Group  
Freedom of Information Act Focal Point  
CMG Director's Office  
BP5301  
Dunstanburgh House  
Benton Park View  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE98 1YX

email to:CMG PQ FOI Correspondence ([PQFOI.CORRESPONDENCE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:PQFOI.CORRESPONDENCE@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK))
  - Refer the customer to the Freedom of Information content on Gov.Uk for more information


 These pages contain lots of useful information about our FOI policy and procedures and what steps to take before making a request.

For more information about FOI refer to the Policy, Law and Decision Making Guidance 

## FOI request received


2. On receipt of what looks like a FOI request:

- Decide whether the requested information can be provided as part of routine correspondence.
- If unsure or in any doubt about the request, contact the CMG PQ FOI Correspondence team.

 For advice or queries email CM PQ FOI Correspondence team . All requests for information under the FOI Act must be responded to within 20 working days unless it is exempt or not held by the CMG. A full list of exemptions is available on the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Information Commissioner's Office.

## Provide a response to FOI team.

3. When asked by the FOI team to provide a response, return the information to the email address provided within the requested timeframe. This allows for all necessary actions to be completed within the statutory 20 day deadline. All FOI responses have to be signed off by the senior civil servant or leader responsible for the specific area.

 The 20 day deadline is counted from the date the request is received anywhere within the CMG by post, email and/or fax.

 It is a criminal offence to destroy, alter, deface, block, erase or conceal any record or original document that is the subject of a FOI request to prevent disclosure.

4. Before returning any information it must be signed off by the senior civil servant or leader responsible for the specific area. Information owners should not issue any response directly to the applicant as there are a number of steps to be taken prior to release stage.

5. If an applicant is not happy with the CMG's response they can ask for the decision to be reviewed. Any correspondence should be forwarded to the FOI focal point.

[FOI Homepage](#) (DWP intranet)

[Freedom Of Information Act](#) (Gov.Uk)

[Subject Access Request \(SAR\)](#)

[Does anyone have the right to ask to see any information held by child maintenance group \(CMG\) regarding them?](#)

Yes, The Freedom Of Information Act (FOI) 2000 gives any person the right to access information held by a public authority.

[How do you obtain this information from CMG?](#)

Requests must be in writing, by letter or email and include a full name and a postal or email address to respond to.