

## [Freedom of information](#)

Under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs), you can request any recorded information held by us. This includes information held on computers, in emails, datasets, printed or handwritten documents, images, videos and sound recordings. The FOI Act and EIRs provide the general right of access to information held by public authorities.

### **Before you make an FOI request**

Before you make an FOI request, you should check this website first. We are committed to the transparent and open publication of information explaining what we do and how we ensure that food is safe. [What we publish](#) outlines the range of information available online.

The publication scheme document details

- information available by class, such as our priorities, policies and procedures
- whether information is published on the internet or as a hard copy
- whether the material is available free of charge or on payment of a fee

You should check previous FOI requests before making an FOI request.

Bear in mind that we won't be able to respond to requests if it will cost more than £600 to find and extract the information - under the FOI Act - or if the amount of work involved would make responding to the request "manifestly unreasonable" - under the EIRs.

Also, some sensitive information isn't available to the public. If this is the case, we will tell you why we can't provide some or all of the information you requested.

[Summary table of exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) (21.03 KB)

[Summary table of exceptions under the Environment Information Regulations 2004](#) (17.35 KB)

### **Making an FOI request**

FOI requests must be made in writing. This can be by email or post. Where these options are not practical we will assist a requestor by telephone. We will only respond to a request in writing.

email: [FCT@food.gov.uk](mailto:FCT@food.gov.uk)

FOI, Complaints and Transparency Team  
Food Standards Agency  
Clive House, 70 Petty France  
Westminster  
London SW1H 9EX

EIR requests can be made by telephone – call 020 7276 8612 or 020 7276 8632

When making a request, you must provide:

- your name
- an address where you would like the information sent to (this can be either a valid email address or a postal address)
- a clear description of the information you want - be as specific as possible about the information you want rather than asking general questions

If you need help getting your request right you can visit the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for useful tips.

Once we receive your request, you will receive a confirmation from us and a full response within 20 working days unless this time frame has to be extended for legitimate reason. This will be explained to you.

[Privacy notice](#)

### **Making a complaint about how your request was handled**

If you are not happy with the way we have handled your request for information, write to the [complaints coordinator](#) and ask for an internal review. This needs to be done within two calendar months of the date you received the response.

If your request is still refused after the internal review, you can complain to the [Information Commissioner](#).

## **Additional information**

### **Disclosure Log criteria**

Our disclosure log lists some of our responses to requests made under both the FOI Act and EIRs that we consider are of wider public interest. We will publish information where there is a wider public interest.

This is guided by the following criteria:

- there is a substantial public, rather than private, interest in the information
- a number of requests have been made on the same or similar subject
- publication would demonstrate how we spend money
- publication would demonstrate how we exercise our regulatory functions and makes decisions
- publication would inform public debate

We will remove all references to personal information where necessary to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000 Publication Scheme**

As a public authority we have a legal duty under Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 to adopt, maintain and keep under review a scheme for the publication of information that is approved by the Information Commissioner and to publish information in accordance with that scheme.

[Find out what we publish](#)

### **Public Records Act: 20 year rule**

Under the Public Records Act 1958, government departments are required to identify records worthy of permanent preservation to transfer them to the National Archives and destroy the rest. In January 2013, the required time period for transfer reduced from 30 years to 20 years, with a 10-year transition period.

If you would like more information on the regulations we adhere to, you can visit the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) and the [National Archives: Reusing public sector information](#).

## **FOI requests**

[Freedom of information requests 2018](#)

[Freedom of information Requests 2010 to 2017 \(National Archives\)](#)