

PART III

For Information Seekers

Method of Seeking Information

A citizen who desires to obtain any information under the Act, should make an application to the Public Information Officer of the concerned public authority in writing in English or Hindi or in the official language of the area in which the application is made. The application should be precise and specific. He should make payment of application fee at the time of submitting the application as prescribed in the Fee Rules. The applicant can send the application by post or through electronic means or can deliver it personally in the office of the public authority. The application can also be sent through an Assistant Public Information Officer.

Application to the Concerned Public Authority

2. The applicant should make application to the concerned public authority. It is advised that he should make all efforts to ascertain as to which is the public authority concerned with the information and should send application to the Public Information Officer of that public authority.
3. It is observed that some applicants seek information in respect of many subjects by way of one application. It creates problem for the Public Information Officer as well as the applicant. The applicant should, therefore, see to it that by way of one application, he seeks information in respect of one subject only.

Fee for Seeking Information

4. The applicant, along with the application, should send application fee to the Public Information Officer. In case of Government of India prescribed application fee is Rs. 10/- which can be paid through a demand draft or a banker's cheque or an Indian Postal Order payable to the Accounts Officer of the public authority. The payment of fee can also be made by way of cash to the Accounts Officer of the public authority or to the Assistant Public Information Officer against proper receipt.
5. The applicant may also be required to pay further fee towards the cost of providing the information, details of which shall be intimated to the applicant by the Public Information Officer. The fee so demanded can be paid the same way as application fee.
6. If the applicant belongs to below poverty line (BPL) category, he is not required to pay any fee. However, he should submit a proof in support of his claim to belong to the below poverty line. The application not accompanied by the prescribed application fee or proof of the applicant's belonging to below poverty line, as the case may be, shall not be a valid application under the Act.

Format of Application

7. There is no prescribed format of application for seeking information. The application can be made on plain paper. The application should, however, have the name and complete postal address of the applicant. Even in cases where the information is sought electronically, the application should contain name and postal address of the applicant.

Filing of Appeal

8. An applicant can file an appeal to the first appellate authority if information is not supplied to him within the prescribed time of thirty days or 48 hours, as the case may be, or is not satisfied with the information furnished to him. Such an appeal, should be filed within a period of thirty days from the date on which the limit of 30 days of supply of information is expired or from the date on which the information or decision of the Public Information Officer is received. The appellate authority of the public authority shall dispose of the appeal within a period of thirty days or in exceptional cases within 45 days of the receipt of the appeal.

9. If the appellate authority fails to pass an order on the appeal within the prescribed period or if the appellant is not satisfied with the order of the first appellate authority, he may prefer a second appeal with the Information Commission within ninety days from the date on which the decision should have been made by the first appellate authority or was actually received by the appellant.
10. The appeal made to the Central Information Commission should contain the following information:
 - (i) name and address of the appellant;
 - (ii) name and address of the Public Information Officer against the decision of whom the appeal is preferred;
 - (iii) particulars of the order including number, if any, against which the appeal is preferred;
 - (iv) brief facts leading to the appeal;
 - (v) if the appeal is preferred against deemed refusal, particulars of the application, including number and date and name and address of the Public Information Officer to whom the application was made;
 - (vi) prayer or relief sought;
 - (v) grounds for prayer or relief;
 - (vi) verification by the appellant; and
 - (vii) any other information, which the Commission may deem necessary for deciding the appeal.
11. The appeal made to the Central Information Commission should be accompanied by the following documents:
 - (i) self-attested copies of the orders or documents against which appeal is made;
 - (ii) copies of the documents relied upon by the appellant and referred to in the appeal; and
 - (iii) an index of the documents referred to in the appeal.

Filing of Complaints

12. A person can make a complaint to the Information Commission if he is unable to submit a request to a Public Information Officer either by reason that such an officer has not been appointed by the concerned public authority; or the Assistant Public Information Officer has refused to accept his or her application

or appeal for forwarding the same to the Public Information Officer or the appellate authority, as the case may be; or he has been refused access to any information requested by him under the RTI Act; or he has not been given a response to a request for information within the time limit specified in the Act; or he has been required to pay an amount of fee which he considers unreasonable; or he believes that he has been given incomplete, misleading or false information.