

LANGUAGE OF ACCESS

Information granted must be made in any of our three official languages (Bislama, English, French) as requested by the applicant.

If information is requested to be granted by any official language, the Government Agency or Relevant Private Entity or private entity must translate the information to the language specified within a reasonable period of time and free of charge.

REPRODUCTION FEES

Access to information is free however reproduction fees may be charged to information except for personal information, a reproduction of information which is in the public interest and if RTI Officer has failed to comply with the time for responding to an application.

A reproduction fee is not refundable if the delay is caused by factors that are beyond the RTI Officer's control.

In the case of Government agencies, reproduction fees are to be paid at the Government Cashier in the Department of Finance.

Reproduction fees charged by the Government agency, relevant private entity or private entity must not exceed VT 50,000.

VISION

To provide open, accountable and participatory government for all the people of Vanuatu.

WHAT IS RTI?

Right To Information (RTI) means that persons and organisations have a legally recognized right to request and obtain access to information, subject to limited exceptions, from public, in some instances, private bodies performing public functions.

Individuals also have a right to access and correct all personal information held by public and private bodies about themselves.

RTI is a basic human right declared by the United Nations.

[#raetblongsave](#)

If you need further information contact:

Right To Information Unit

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PMB 9053

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Website: www.rti.gov.vu



RIGHT TO INFORMATION

INFORMATION FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS



WHAT IS INFORMATION?

Information means any material in any form, including:

documents, manuscripts, memos, emails, advices, press releases, circulars, orders, logbooks, contracts, reports, samples, photographs, film, sound recording, map, plan, graph or drawing, models, data materials held in any electronic form and information relating to any private body which can be accessed by a public authority under any other law for the time being in force.

RTI LAW IMPLEMENTATION

Vanuatu now has a RTI Law gazetted on 6th February 2017. The RTI Law will be implemented over a two and a half year period and the RTI Law applies to all Public Authorities, Ministries, Departments, Statutory Bodies and Government companies (wholly owned by the Government or partly financed by the Government).

Within six months from gazettal of the RTI Act an order will be made by the Prime Minister to state which Government Agencies the act applies to. Another order will be made within 24 months after the first order is made to cover some other agencies.

Upon expiration of this 24 months a last order will be made to cover all Government agencies and relevant private entities.

PROACTIVE PUBLICATION

All Government agencies, relevant private entities and private entities must regularly publish information describing their institution and responsibilities, rules guidelines, their business hours, title, and business address, RTI Officer and other information required under RTI Act. No.13 of 2016 Part 2, Division 1.

EXEMPTIONS UNDER RTI LAW

In order to protect the well-being of the Government of Vanuatu, certain information is exempted from the RTI Law, these exemptions include:

- *Personal information.*
- *Legal privilege.*
- *Commercial confidential, public economic interests.*
- *National security, heritage sites and the environment.*
- *Policy making and operations of agencies..*

RECORDS & INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

All Government agencies and relevant private entities must improve their Records Management systems to facilitate the RTI Law. Proper records management systems underlie all information disclosure regimes.

Information must be properly created, located, retained, and accessible to ensure access to information is efficient. Without proper systems, information can be manipulated, deleted or destroyed and in the end, their integrity may be questioned.

Officials will require training and refresher courses on proper records management practices including records retention and destruction.

The Government is committed to ensuring that records management systems, are improved to facilitate RTI.

WHY IS RTI LAW IMPORTANT?

The Right To Information Act:

- *Shows the Vanuatu Governments commitment to the United Nations Convention on Human Rights.*
- *Helps to achieve goals under NSDP.*
- *Encourage the use of ICT innovations to help open up government held information to the public.*
- *Help improve governments record management system.*
- *Improve government services in decision making.*
- *Includes citizens in the decision making process.*
- *Promote good governance and accountability in government and other agencies.*
- *Supports and protects all human rights.*
- *Fights and exposes corruption.*
- *Help achieve a just, wealthy, healthy and wise Vanuatu.*

PURPOSE

To increase public participation in governance.

To promote transparency, accountability, & national development by empowering & educating the public to understand and act upon their rights to information.

To establish voluntary & mandatory mechanisms to give the public the right to access information.

To give effect to the right to freedom of expression.

To provide access to information held by government agencies.