

Right to Information

Presentation for
VIPAM intern students

What is Right to Information?

Right to information means the right to information that is accessible under the RTI Act and which is held by or under the control of a Government agency or relevant private entity.

Right to information includes your right to:

- * Inspect work & records
- * Take notes, extracts, certified copies of records or information; or
- * Obtain information in the form of compact discs, diskettes, floppy discs, tapes, video cassettes or in any other form electronic mode or through printouts where as such information is stored in a computer or in any other device

What is Information can be accessed using RTI?

"information" means any material in any form, including

- * Documents
- * Manuscripts
- * Memos
- * E-mails
- * Advices
- * Press releases
- * Circulars
- * Orders
- * Logbooks
- * Contracts
- * Reports
- * Samples
- * Photographs
- * Film
- * Sound recording
- * Map, plan, graph or drawing
- * Models
- * Data material 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.

Vanuatu RTI Act

The RTI Bill Act of 2016 was passed by the Parliament of Vanuatu in November 2016 and it was gazetted on the 6th of February 2017.

RTI Act applies to 59 government agencies and relevant private entities

- * Prime Minister's Office
- * State Law Office
- * Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination
- * Citizenship Office
- * Language Services Department
- * Government Remuneration Tribunal (GRT)
- * Vanuatu Project Management Unit
- * Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- * Department of Foreign Affairs
- * Department of External Trade
- * Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
- * Department of Finance and Treasury
- * Ministry of Lands
- * Department of Lands
- * Ministry of Agriculture
- * Department of Bio-Security
- * Ministry of Internal Affairs
- * Department of Local Authorities
- * Department of Labour
- * Civil Status Department
- * Ministry of Climate Change
- * Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department
- * Department of Energy
- * National Disaster Management Office
- * Department of Environment Unit
- * Ministry of Justice
- * Department of Correctional Services
- * Department of Women's Affairs
- * Ministry of Education
- * Department of Education
- * Department of Immigration and Border Control
- * Vanuatu Qualification Authority
- * Utilities Regulatory Authority
- * Vanuatu Cultural Centre
- * National Archives
- * Ombudsman
- * Vanuatu National Provident Fund
- * Vanuatu Agriculture & Research Training Centre
- * Vanuatu Financial Service Commission
- * Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- * Telecom and Radio Communications Regulator
- * Ministry of Trade, Tourism, Commerce and Industry
- * Department of Industry
- * Department of Cooperatives
- * Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity
- * Department of Fisheries
- * Department of Biosecurity
- * Ministry of Health
- * Department of Public Health
- * Department of Corporate Services, Policy, Planning of Health
- * Department of Hospital Services
- * Vanuatu Police Force – Vanuatu Police Force
 - Vanuatu Mobile Force
 - Police Maritime Wing
- * Department of Tourism
- * National Statistics Office
- * Customs Department
- * Livestock Department
- * Department of Agriculture
- * Department of Forestry
- * OGCIO

Making a RTI request

The Right to Information Act No. of 2016 (RTI Act) gives you the right to request access to records held by government agencies and relevant private entities.

As of this date any persons can make a RTI request to any of the 59 government agencies or relevant private entities which the RTI Act applies to them.

Application can be made using forms available or by telephone or email.

What details to provide in a RTI application?

Applications for information do not need to be made on a particular form but may be made on this application form if preferred. An application shall include the following:

- * A name
- * A postal address, fax number or email address to which information may be sent
- * A telephone number at which the applicant may be reached
- * The form of access required in accordance with section 28
- * The language in which the information granted is to be supplied
- * An indication of whether the application is being made on behalf of a person and the submission of proof of the capacity in which the applicant is making the application, to the reasonable satisfaction of the Right to Information Officer
- * An indication of whether the applicant believes that the information is necessary to safeguard the life or liberty of himself or herself or any other person, and the basis for that belief

Exemption under the 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.

Language of access

- * Information 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.
- * Reproduction fees charged by the Government agency, relevant private entity or private must not exceed VT50,000.

Thank you!

If you need further information contact:

Right to Information Unit

Prime Minister's office

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