

ACCESS TO INFORMATION IS YOUR RIGHT!

WHAT IS PAIA ALL ABOUT?

The Act is there to:

- Protect our Constitutional right to access information.
- Enhance the transparency, accountability and effectiveness of government.

WHO CAN I ASK FOR INFORMATION?

There are two distinct groups that you may request information from : Public bodies and Private bodies. Public bodies include :

- Any government department at national, provincial and local level e.g. Any Municipality or State department.
- Any institution performing a public function/duty for the benefit of the community e.g. universities, schools, parastatals.

Private bodies are companies, professions, trades and closed corporations.

SO I CAN ASK A PUBLIC BODY ABOUT ANYTHING?

Yes, you can ask for any information, although access to certain information may be refused. Public bodies are not allowed to give out the following information:

- Personal or commercial information about a third party;
- Financial, technical or scientific information about a third party;
- Information which may affect court or police proceedings (e.g. police dockets in bail proceedings);
- Certain South African Revenue Services information.

However, there is something called the public interest override. It is a clause in the Act that states that any of the above information must be disclosed if the disclosure would be in the public interest. This may include :

- Where it would reveal evidence of a failure to comply with the law;
- Where it would reveal a public safety or environmental risk;
- Any matter where the public interest clearly outweighs the harm that might be done in disclosing such a matter.

Public bodies should give information such as the following to you:

- Personal information about yourself.
- Details about the official functions of a public official or body.
- Any evidence of violations of the law.
- Any record that is already publicly available.

WILL I HAVE TO PAY FOR THE INFORMATION?

There are nominal fees that may be charged for the information that you request. If you are unable to pay the fees, you can apply to be exempted from payment.

HOW CAN I GET THE INFORMATION?

To get the information you want, you have to follow the correct procedure. This means using the right forms – Form A.

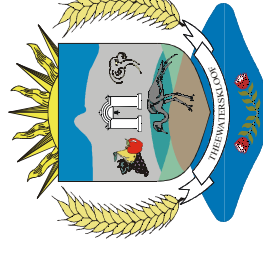
As of October 2001, every public body must have an Information Officer and Deputy Information Officer. These officers must provide you with reasonable assistance. This means that they must help members of the public to access information they seek. In the instance of Theewaterskloof Municipality, the Information Officer is the Municipal Manager and the Manager : Administration is the Deputy Information Officer.

To help you find the information you seek, both public and private bodies must publish a manual detailing what records they keep. These manuals also contain contact details of the Information Officer and Deputy Information Officer.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THEY REFUSE TO GIVE ME THE INFORMATION I WANT?

Public and private bodies have 30 days to respond to your request. If your request is refused, you must be told why in writing. You must also be told which section of the Act was used to refuse your request.

In addition, you must be told that you may appeal the decision internally or apply to court. You must also be told how much time you have to submit your appeal.



CONTACT DETAILS :

Deputy Information Officer :
Theewaterskloof Municipality
Marelize Faul
Tel No : 028-2143365 x 3502
Fax Nr : 08666398433
Email : marelizebe@twk.org.za

Public bodies are obliged to give you any information you ask for, with some exceptions.

Private bodies are obliged to give you only that information which is needed to exercise one of your rights.