

# Template: First appeal

**If your RTI was rejected.** See Why RTI Applications Get Rejected in India — and How to Avoid It. Five reasons, the exact fix for each, and two case studies.

*Base template for an appeal under Section 19(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005, addressed to the First Appellate Authority. Notes on state variants appear at the end.*

## When to use this

A first appeal lies to the First Appellate Authority of the public authority in three situations.

1. The applicant has received a decision of the Central Public Information Officer under Section 7, and the applicant is aggrieved by that decision.
2. The applicant has not received a decision of the Officer within the period specified in Section 7(1) — thirty days from the receipt of the complete application, or forty-eight hours where the matter concerns the life or liberty of a person.
3. The applicant has received information the applicant considers incomplete, misleading, or false.

The first appeal must be filed within thirty days from the date of receipt of the decision of the Officer, or within thirty days from the date on which the decision ought to have been received. The First Appellate Authority may admit a delayed appeal if the appellant shows sufficient cause.

## The template

To,  
The First Appellate Authority,  
[Name of Public Authority],  
[Full address of the Public Authority],  
[City, PIN].

Subject: First appeal under Section 19(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005, against the decision / non-decision dated [date] of the Central Public Information Officer.

Sir / Madam,

1. I, [full name of the appellant], son / daughter of [father's or mother's name], resident of [full residential address], am a citizen of India and the applicant in the RTI application referred to in the following paragraph.

2. I had made an application dated [date of original application] under Section 6(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005, seeking the information specified therein from the public authority. A photocopy of the application, together with the proof of the prescribed fee, is enclosed as Annexure A.

3. [Select one or more of the following paragraphs and strike out the rest.]

3(a). [Where the Officer has rejected the application wholly or partly.] The Central

Public Information Officer, by a communication dated [date], has [rejected the application / partly rejected the application / furnished incomplete information / furnished misleading information / furnished false information]. A photocopy of the communication is enclosed as Annexure B.

3(b). [Where the Officer has not replied within time.] The Central Public Information Officer has not furnished the information within the period of thirty days prescribed under Section 7(1) of the Act, which expired on [date]. The application is deemed to have been refused under Section 7(2) of the Act.

3(c). [Where the fee demanded is unreasonable.] The Central Public Information Officer has, by a communication dated [date], demanded further fee in a sum the appellant considers not to be in accordance with the Rules. A photocopy of the communication is enclosed as Annexure B.

4. The appellant is aggrieved by the aforesaid decision or non-decision on the following grounds.

a. The information sought does not attract any of the exemptions under Section 8 or Section 9 of the Act. [Amplify with reference to the specific exemption invoked in the order under appeal, and the reason why the exemption does not apply on the facts.]

b. The Officer has not recorded reasons for the decision as required by Section 7(8)(i) of the Act. A denial without reasons is not a denial in law. [Cite the relevant communication.]

c. Section 8(2) of the Act has not been considered by the Officer. [Where the matter concerns the utilisation of public funds, the conduct of a public servant in the course of duty, or other matters of public interest, state the ground expressly.]

d. Severability under Section 10 of the Act has not been considered. Where a record contains both exempt and non-exempt information, the non-exempt part must be severed and furnished. [Cite the relevant communication.]

e. [Any other ground on which the appeal is preferred.]

5. The appellant, accordingly, prays that the First Appellate Authority may be pleased to:

a. set aside the decision of the Central Public Information Officer dated [date], and

b. direct the Officer to furnish the information sought in the application, in the form requested, within the period specified in the order of the First Appellate Authority, and

c. pass such further or other orders as the First Appellate Authority may deem fit in the circumstances of the case.

6. The appellant certifies that this appeal is being preferred within the period of thirty days from the date of receipt of the decision of the Officer / the date on which the decision ought to have been received.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature of the appellant]

[Full name of the appellant, typed or printed]

[Date]

[Place]

Enclosures:

1. Annexure A: Photocopy of the application under Section 6(1) dated [date].
2. Annexure B: Photocopy of the communication under appeal, dated [date]. [If applicable.]
3. [Any other document on which the appellant relies.]

## Legal basis

- **Section 19(1)** of the Act provides that any person who does not receive a decision within the time specified in Section 7(1), or who is aggrieved by a decision of the Central Public Information Officer, may within thirty days from the expiry of such period or from the receipt of such a decision, prefer an appeal to such officer who is senior in rank to the Central Public Information Officer in each public authority.
- **Section 19(5)** of the Act provides that in any appeal proceedings, the onus to prove that a denial of a request was justified shall be on the Officer who denied the request.
- **Section 19(6)** of the Act provides that an appeal under Section 19(1) shall be disposed of within thirty days of the receipt of the appeal, or within such extended period not exceeding a total of forty-five days, for reasons to be recorded in writing.
- **Section 7(2)** of the Act provides that if the Officer fails to give a decision on the request for information within the period specified in Section 7(1), the Officer shall be deemed to have refused the request.
- **Section 7(8)** of the Act provides that where a request is rejected, the Officer shall communicate to the person making the request the reasons for the rejection, the period within which an appeal against the rejection may be preferred, and the particulars of the appellate authority.

## Common mistakes

- **Appealing before the thirty-day period under Section 7(1) has expired.** An appeal under Section 19(1)(b) on the ground of non-decision lies only after the statutory period has elapsed. An appeal filed on the twenty-ninth day is premature.
- **Filing the appeal with the Central Public Information Officer.** The correct addressee is the First Appellate Authority of the public authority, who is an officer senior in rank to the Officer whose decision is under appeal. A first appeal wrongly addressed to the Officer himself is treated as a representation and not as a first appeal under the Act.
- **Failure to engage Section 8(2).** After the amendment to Section 8(1)(j) effected by the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, the public interest reasoning that earlier operated within clause (j) now operates through Section 8(2). A first appeal that fails to engage Section 8(2) expressly, in a matter where public interest is material, loses a line of attack that the appellant may need before the Information Commission at second appeal.
- **Failure to plead the ground of severability under Section 10.** Where the public authority has denied the whole record, the appellant should plead that the non-exempt portions ought to have been severed and furnished. The Appellate Authority can and does grant partial relief on this ground.

## Related pages

- Justification for denial is mandatory
- Severability
- Grounds for rejection
- DPDP Rules 2025 and the amendment to Section 8(1)(j)
- Guide for applicants

## Notes on state variants

- **Time limit for disposal by the First Appellate Authority.** Section 19(6) of the Act applies uniformly across jurisdictions. State RTI Rules in some States prescribe a fee for preferring a first appeal. Central Government practice does not require a fee at the first appeal stage. Check the applicable State RTI Rules.
- **Designation of the First Appellate Authority.** In Central public authorities, the First Appellate Authority is the officer designated as such under the Notification of the authority. In several State departments, the office of the First Appellate Authority is held ex-officio by a senior officer identified in a State Government notification. Practitioners are advised to ascertain the correct designation before filing.

## Last reviewed

19 April 2026

rti, templates, applicant, first-appeal, section-19, 2026



### Right to Information Wiki

The working reference for India's Right to Information Act, 2005.



**Read online**

<https://www.righttoinformation.wiki/templates/first-appeal>

**Main website**

<https://www.righttoinformation.wiki/>

**Last updated**

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