

# Template: First RTI application

**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 application under Section 6(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005, addressed to a Central Public Information Officer. Notes on state variants appear at the end.*

## When to use this

This template is used to seek information from a public authority for the first time. It is the starting point of every RTI matter. It is addressed to the Central Public Information Officer of the concerned public authority. Where the applicant does not know the correct Central Public Information Officer, the application may still be sent to the public authority, and the Officer who receives it is under a duty under Section 6(3) to transfer it to the appropriate Officer within five days.

The applicant is not required to state the reason for the request. The Officer is not entitled to ask for the reason. Citizenship, however, is a pre-condition and must be declared on the face of the application.

## The template

To,  
The Central Public Information Officer,  
[Name of Public Authority],  
[Full address of the Public Authority],  
[City, PIN].

Subject: Application for information under Section 6(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005.

Sir / Madam,

1. I, [full name of the applicant], son / daughter of [father's or mother's name], resident of [full residential address], am a citizen of India.

2. Under Section 6(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005, I seek the following information held by or under the control of your public authority.

a. [State the information sought. Be specific. Identify the record, the period, the department, and the subject-matter. Number each item of information separately.]

b. [Second item of information, if any.]

c. [Third item of information, if any.]

3. I have enclosed the prescribed application fee of ten rupees by way of [Indian Postal Order No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_ / Demand Draft No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_ / cash receipt dated \_\_\_\_\_ issued by the cashier of the public authority], drawn in favour of

the Accounts Officer of the public authority.

4. I request that the information be furnished in the following form: [photocopy of the record / inspection of the record on a mutually convenient date / certified copy / electronic form by email to the address below / any other form].

5. Under the proviso to Section 7(1), I request that the information be furnished within forty-eight hours if the matter concerns the life or liberty of a person. [Include this clause only if the matter concerns life or liberty. Strike out if not applicable.]

6. I am willing to pay the further fee, if any, leviable under the Rules for photocopies or other forms of information, on receipt of the intimation under Section 7(3).

7. For the purposes of communication, the Officer may use the following details.

Postal address: [full postal address of the applicant]

Email: [email address of the applicant, if available]

Telephone: [telephone number of the applicant, if available]

Yours faithfully,

[Signature of the applicant]

[Full name of the applicant, typed or printed]

[Date]

[Place]

Enclosures:

1. Indian Postal Order / Demand Draft / Cash receipt for ten rupees.

2. [Any supporting document, such as a photocopy of an earlier communication to which the present application relates.]

## Legal basis

- **Section 6(1)** of the Act provides the statutory right to make a request for information. The request is to be made in writing or through electronic means, in English, Hindi, or the official language of the area.
- **Section 6(2)** of the Act provides that the applicant shall not be required to give any reason for requesting the information or any personal detail except those necessary for contacting the applicant.
- **Section 6(3)** of the Act provides that where an application is made to a public authority requesting information which is held by another public authority, or the subject-matter of which is more closely connected with the functions of another public authority, the public authority shall transfer the application or the relevant part of it to that other public authority within five days and inform the applicant of the transfer.
- **Section 7(1)** of the Act provides that the Central Public Information Officer, on receipt of a request under Section 6, shall as expeditiously as possible, and in any case within thirty days of the receipt of the request, either provide the information on payment of the prescribed fee or reject the request for any of the reasons specified in Sections 8 and 9.
- **The proviso to Section 7(1)** provides that where the information sought concerns the life or liberty of a person, it shall be provided within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the request.

- **The Right to Information (Regulation of Fee and Cost) Rules, 2005** prescribe the application fee of ten rupees for Central Public Authorities.

## Common mistakes

The following are the most common grounds on which Central Public Information Officers reject applications. Practitioners are advised to avoid these while drafting.

- **Seeking opinion, advice, or an answer to a question.** The Act provides access to information held by the public authority. It does not require the Officer to create information, offer an interpretation, or answer a hypothetical question. An application that asks “why did the authority do X” is liable to be rejected. The correct form is “the record of the decision taken by the authority in respect of X”.
- **Seeking information in voluminous or omnibus form.** An application that asks for “all files” or “all records” of a department is likely to attract Section 7(9) (disproportionate diversion of resources). The correct form identifies the record, the period, and the subject.
- **Failure to tender the fee.** An application without the prescribed fee is not a complete application. The time under Section 7(1) begins to run from the receipt of the complete application.
- **Failure to declare citizenship.** Only a citizen of India may make a request under the Act. The declaration of citizenship on the face of the application avoids a preliminary objection.
- **Addressing the application to a named officer by designation other than the Central Public Information Officer.** The correct addressee is the Central Public Information Officer by office, not by name. A change of incumbent does not invalidate the application.

## Related pages

- Citizenship under the RTI Act
- What is information under the RTI Act
- Public authority
- Disproportionate diversion of resources
- Guide for applicants

## Notes on state variants

- **Fee amount.** Central Government rules prescribe ten rupees. State rules vary. Several States prescribe twenty rupees, fifty rupees, or one hundred rupees. A handful of States have notified different amounts for different categories of public authorities. Check the applicable State RTI Rules before completing the fee block.
- **Mode of payment.** Central rules permit an Indian Postal Order, a Demand Draft, a banker's cheque, or cash against receipt. Some States require a Court Fee Stamp affixed to the application. Some States prescribe a payment in cash at the counter with a receipt in a specific form. The mode of payment is the single most common ground on which a State-level application is rejected on a technicality.
- **The addressee.** In several States, the designated officer is not styled “Central Public Information Officer” but “State Public Information Officer” or “Public Information Officer”. Use

the correct designation for the jurisdiction.

## Last reviewed

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### Right to Information Wiki

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



**Read online**

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

**Main website**

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

**Last updated**

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