

Freedom of Information

Freedom of Information (FOI) is legislation that will give you the right to obtain information held by public authorities. Under FOI, everyone has equal rights to access this information.

FOI legislation has been introduced by governments and public sector authorities across the world to:

- increase transparency and openness
- make public authorities more accountable
- improve decision making
- enable people to get involved in decisions that may affect them

Public authorities transfer any records that have been identified as having historic value and that are no longer in administrative use to Jersey Archive under the Public Records Law.

Jersey Archive holds over 250,000 records from public authorities. The majority of these records have been available to view at Jersey Archive since their transfer and will continue to be available under the new law.

Exempt and Non-Exempt Records

Under FOI legislation records can have an exemption to access applied for a number of reasons including; court information, national security and personal information. A full list of exemptions can be found in Parts 4 and 5 of the FOI law.

Exemptions are applied by a public authority when records are transferred to the Archive. The Archive cannot make exempt records available without specific permission from the public authority.

Requesting Information from the Archive under FOI

Our online catalogue at www.jerseyheritage.org gives details of all catalogued material held at the Archive. The catalogue will indicate whether an item is open/non-exempt or closed to public access/exempt.

We also have material at the Archive that has not yet been catalogued in detail but can be searched by staff on request.

Non-Exempt Information

Non-exempt information can be viewed at Jersey Archive in our Reading Rooms. Individuals who have not used the Archive before will be asked to register as a reader on production of a driving license or passport as ID. Registration and in person access to the information is free of charge.

Copies of non-exempt information can be made by our staff and the normal archive charges will apply – see <http://www.jerseyheritage.org/media/Jersey%20Archive/table.pdf>.

Exempt Information

Permission to view exempt information must be received from the public authority who own the records. If you would like to view exempt information you will need to make a formal Freedom of Information Request.

Requests should be sent, in writing, to the Central Freedom of Information Unit FOI@gov.je.

Requests for records from the Parishes should be sent, in writing, to FOI@parish.gov.je

When an FOI request is made:

- it must be in writing
- someone asking for information doesn't have to say why they want it
- the States of Jersey are legally obliged to provide the information (subject to certain exceptions and if we hold the information)
- the information must be provided within 20 working days of the request

FOI and Data Protection

- FOI and Data Protection deal with information in different ways.
- Data Protection is about protecting personal data, whereas FOI is about access to information.
- FOI covers all information held by public authorities, except requests for personal information about yourself.
- The Data Protection Law applies to personal data only. It gives you the right to access information about yourself. Data Protection legislation protects your personal data.
- Find out more about Data Protection on the Office of the Information Commissioner's website: <https://dataci.je/>.

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