



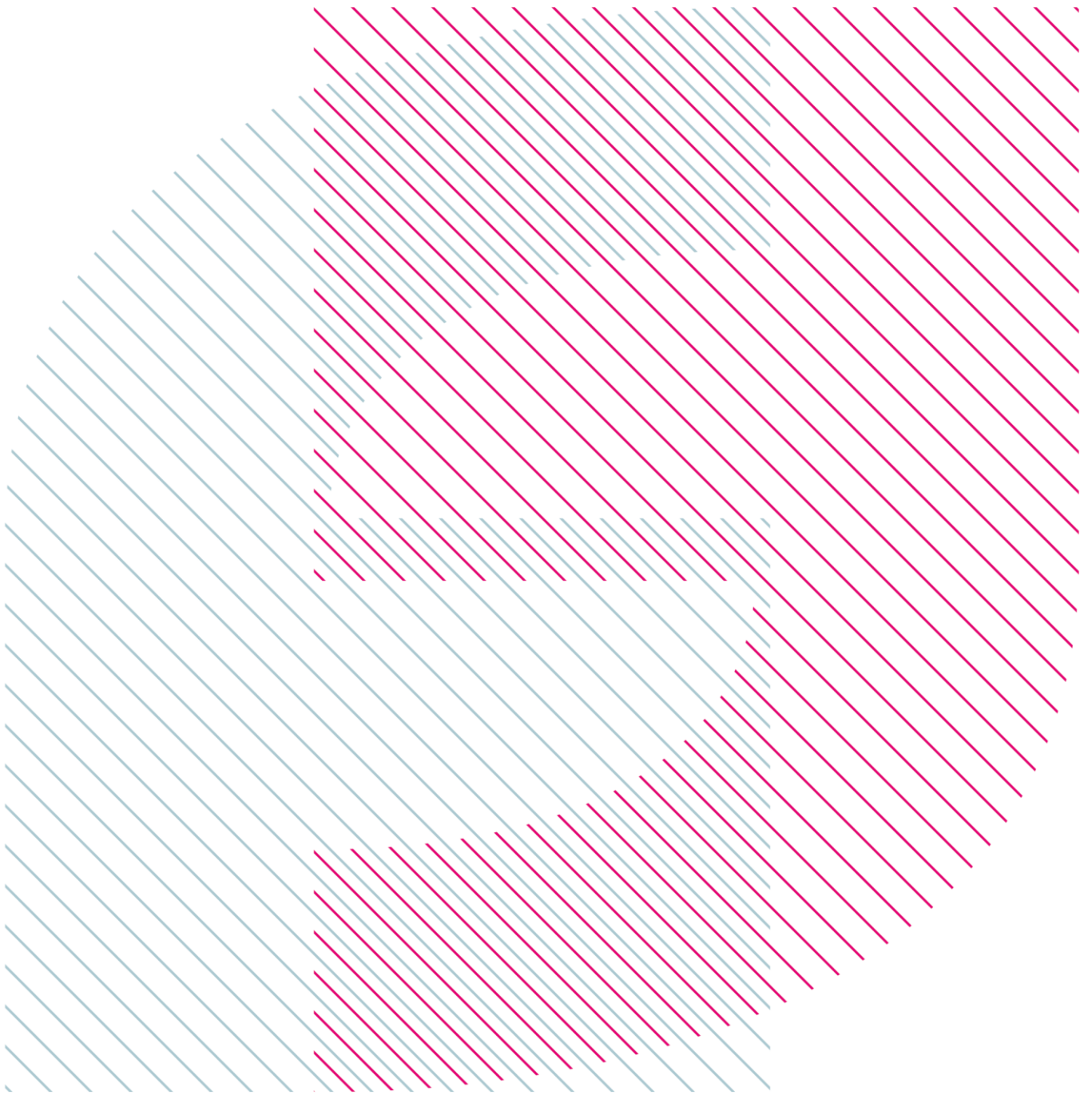
# Access to information policy

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Policy Owner: Data Protection  
and Information Compliance  
Officer

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## Policy on a page

The reason for this policy	LeO is committed to operating in an open and transparent manner. This policy sets out the information we will publish, and how you can request information we hold.
What the policy covers	<p>The policy sets out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction (section 1)</li> <li>2. What we publish (section 2 )</li> <li>3. Am I entitled to see other information (section 3)</li> <li>4. How to make a request for information (section 4)</li> <li>5. Will I be charged a fee (section 5)</li> <li>6. Am I entitled to the information (section 6)</li> <li>7. Further advice and assistance (section 7)</li> </ol>
The essentials that you need to know	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We will publish the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who we are and what we do</li> <li>• What we spend and how we spend it</li> <li>• Procurement and contracting</li> <li>• Expenditure</li> <li>• Senior management team expenses</li> <li>• Our priorities and how we are doing</li> <li>• How we make decisions</li> <li>• Our policies and procedures</li> <li>• Lists and registers</li> <li>• The service we offer</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. You can request additional information we do not normally publish.</li> <li>3. We will provide additional information, subject to any exceptions detailed within the legislation covering this area.</li> </ol>
Where you can get help and advice	<p>Please contact the DPICO:</p> <p>Christine Manise  Legal Ombudsman  PO Box 6803  Wolverhampton  WV1 9WF  E-mail: <a href="mailto:infosec@legalombudsman.org.uk">infosec@legalombudsman.org.uk</a>  Tel: 0121 435 1645</p>

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## 1 Introduction

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The Legal Ombudsman is committed to operating openly. This means:

- We will try to respond positively to every reasonable request for information in order to maintain a high level of public and stakeholder trust and confidence in our organisation.
- We will routinely publish information as part of our Publication Scheme.
- We welcome the rights of access to information which are set out in the Freedom of Information Act, the Data Protection Act, and the Environmental Information Regulations.

We will publish information about both our work, and that of our Board, the Office for Legal Complaints (OLC).

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## 2 What we publish

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The type of information we routinely publish falls into the following categories:

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### Who we are and what we do

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We will publish general information about our organisation: for example, our location, internal contacts and committees, and details about how we are organised and our Board.

- i. Biographies of our Board members (The OLC)
- ii. Biographies of our Senior Ombudsmen, and Senior Management Team
- iii. OLC Board members' register of interests
- iv. How to contact us
- v. Web links to other related bodies and information (e.g. Legal Services Board, Law Society, British & Irish Ombudsman Association, The Legal Services Act 2007, etc.).

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### What we spend and how we spend it

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We will publish information about our finances: for example, our forecast and actual income, plus what we spend, what we buy, and the contracts we have with external suppliers.

- i. Annual Reports
- ii. Business Plan
- iii. Board and Senior Management Team member expenses reports

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### Procurement and Contracting

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We will publish the following information about the procurement and contracting of services:

- i. All new tender with a value of over £10,000
- ii. All new contracts with a value of over £10,000.

## Expenditure

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We will publish:

- i. All new items of expenditure over £25,000
- ii. All new items of expenditure over £500 on Government Procurement cards

## Board and Senior Management Team expenses

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We will publish:

- i. Expenses incurred by, or on behalf of, members of the OLC and the Legal Ombudsman's Senior Management Team.

## What our priorities are and how we are doing

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We will publish information about our future plans and how well we're performing:

- i. Business Plan
- ii. Annual Reports
- iii. Annual Chief Ombudsman report (see Annual Reports)

## How we make decisions

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We will publish information about our decision making processes and consultations.

- i. Public consultations
- ii. Responses to public consultations
- iii. Committee constitutions and terms of reference
  - a. OLC Board (the Legal Ombudsman Board)
  - b. OLC Remuneration and Nomination Committee
  - c. OLC Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- iv. Agreed minutes of meetings
  - a. OLC Board (the Legal Ombudsman Board)
  - b. OLC Remuneration and Nomination Committee
  - c. OLC Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
- v. Board meeting papers will generally be published in full, although it may be necessary in some circumstances to extract or to redact specific information or, occasionally, to withhold publication.

## Our policies and procedures

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We will publish information about our more commonly requested policies and procedures:

- i. Service complaint procedure
- ii. Our scheme rules

- iii. Equality priority objectives
- iv. Our governance documents

## Lists and registers

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We will publish details of the various lists and registers of information we're required to publish, either by law or by other external regulations:

- i. Our gifts and hospitality register
- ii. OLC Board members' register of interests

## The services we offer

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We will publish general advice and guidance about our services: for example, booklets, leaflets and media releases.

- i. Publications
- ii. Summary of cases
- iii. Data relating to decisions we have made
- iv. News and events

## 3 Am I entitled to see other Information?

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You can request any information that has not already been published via our publication scheme under the following:

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016 and the 2018 UK Data Protection Act, gives you the right to see any information the Legal Ombudsman holds about you personally, whether on paper or in electronic records. 'Personal data' is defined as data that relates to a living individual who can be identified from the information held by the 'data controller' (in this case, the Legal Ombudsman).

You have a right to ask us for the personal information or other data that we hold about you. This includes:

- a description of the data being used;
  - what it's being used for;
  - who might see or use the information;
  - where the data comes from, if this is known; and
  - the identity of the data controller.
  - Where your data needs rectification or need to be erased
  - Where you may object to further processing
  - Informed decision in relation to automation and profiling
- The **Freedom of Information Act 2000 & Environmental Information Regulations 2004** provide a right to request any recorded information held by a public authority such as the Legal Ombudsman.

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## 4 How do I make a request for information?

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If you can't see an online version, or the information isn't listed in the Publication Scheme, please write or send an e-mail to:

The Information Rights  
and Security Team  
Legal Ombudsman  
PO Box 6803  
Wolverhampton. WV1 9WF

E-mail: [infosec@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:infosec@legalombudsman.org.uk)

When requesting information, please include the following details:

- For Subject Access Requests at least two official documents to verify your identity including your address and a description of the information requested
- Freedom of Information (FOI)/ Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests please include your name and an address
- A description of the information or documents you would like to see.

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## 5 Will I be charged a fee?

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We do not charge a fee when a request is made.

In a case where the request is excessive and repetitive a fee might be charged.

For information requested under FOIA we may charge fees as set out by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). If fees apply we will let you know what they will be in advance. Under the MoJ fees guidance, if we estimate that the cost of:

- determining whether we hold the information; and
- locating it, retrieving it and extracting it is more than £600, we are not obliged to comply with the request. £600 is equivalent to three and a half days work at a set rate of £25 per hour.

There is no appropriate limit for access to Environmental Information.

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## 6 Am I entitled to the information?

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Although we are committed to providing the information you have asked for, there will be valid reasons why some information may be withheld. The reasons information can be withheld from disclosure are set out in the Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act, and Environmental Information Regulations. If we are unable to provide you with the information we will explain the reasons why. In some instances other legislation may prevent the Legal Ombudsman from disclosure under our obligations concerning access to information.

The duration of receiving a response for a Freedom of Information request is 20 working days while the duration of a Subject Access Request is 30 calendar days.

If we are unable to provide you with the information we will explain the reasons why.

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## 7 Further advice and assistance

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If you need advice or assistance please contact the Legal Ombudsman Information Rights and Security Team at:

The Information Rights and Security Team

Legal Ombudsman

PO Box 6803

Wolverhampton WV1 9WF

E-mail: [infosec@legalombudsman.org.uk](mailto:infosec@legalombudsman.org.uk)

The Legal Ombudsman's Data Protection Officer is Christine Manise Tel: 0121 435 1645

The Information Commissioner Office upholds information rights. Their website provides guidance and advice at <https://ico.org.uk/>