

18/781 Freedom of Information Amendment Bill – Policy Approval (relates to 18/782 Freedom of Information Amendment Bill)

Summary of Impacts	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TBL assessment indicated that there were not significant social, environmental or economic impacts of the proposed changes. • While some proposed amendments may engage human rights, such as the right to equality, safeguards will be included to ensure that vulnerable groups of people such as those who have transient accommodation, or are in prison, are not precluded from access to documents sought under FOI. • Any economic impact will be positive in reducing administrative burden and potentially reducing demand on agencies processing requests.

Key to impacts: Red – negative, Blue – neutral, Green – positive.

Social

Justice and rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendments are intended to streamline FOI processing which should have benefits for applicants as well as respondent agencies. • The proposal will allow greater flexibility for the Ombudsman to resolve issues informally, which is likely to help applicants to get access to documents rather than waiting for a formal review. • The amendments allow a decision to be suspended or refused where an applicant is unable to be contacted. This could potentially have an impact on people who are experiencing homelessness or incarceration. However, it will be possible in these cases to resubmit an application at a later date. Other safeguards will be included to ensure that the amendments do not have a disproportionate impact on vulnerable or disadvantaged people.
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Economic

ACT Government Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendments are intended to reduce administrative burden on agencies and allow them to process FOI access requests more efficiently. This may have positive impacts on future budget processes.
Productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amendments should improve productivity by reducing unnecessary administrative processes and allowing greater flexibility to manage workloads.

Environmental

Nil impact.