



ACT
Government
Community Services

(Ref: CSD 16/03)

s41 FOI Act

Dear s41 FOI

I refer to your application under the ACT *Freedom of Information Act 1989* (the FOI Act), received by the Directorate on 16 February 2015, in which you sought access to the following information:

"Copies of any documents containing data, or other types of information collected by the Department or other sources and retained in the Department on sexual orientation-associated homelessness and/or foster care and/or reported cases of abuse and neglect among under 18s.

I am not interested in the personal details of any individuals but am interested in any information that indicates the position of LGBTI people in respect of these matters. Comparison data would also be useful to me should it exist."

Under the FOI Act, section 22, I am an officer authorised to make a decision in respect of a request for information.

Decision

The advice I have received from across the Directorate is that some data is collected in relation to LGBTIQ status. I understand that individuals who have contact with the Directorate may choose to share their LGBTIQ status, however this is not something that is routinely collected or stored in an appropriate format to be able to draw a report from.

I can however provide the following information about what specific areas of the Directorate and across the ACT Government have in place in relation to people who identify as LGBTIQ in the ACT community.

Staff within the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support have access to a Practice Guideline to assist them in working with these children/young people appropriately and provide the correct assistance if necessary.

The ACT Government has a Ministerial Advisory Council called the Youth Advisory Council. This Council provides young people aged between 12 and 25 years with an opportunity to participate and provide consultation on issues that affect their lives.

One of the key priorities of this Council's work plan is in relation to 'Gender and Sexuality Diversity'. The Council plans to support and create a well educated and accepting community for LGBTIQ young people. The Council aims to reduce stigma and misconception through working within the Safe Schools Coalition and will work to increase awareness through events across the ACT. More information about the Youth Advisory Council can be found at

<http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/youth-interact/youth-advisory-council-yac>.

The ACT Government also has a LGBTIQ Ministerial Advisory Council which provides strategic advice to the Government on issues affecting LGBTIQ communities in the ACT (this Council is for all matters relating to LGBTIQ, not specific to young people). More information about this Council can found at

<http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/wac/community/act-lesbian,-gay,-bisexual,-transgender-and-intersex-community-advisory-council>.

Review rights

My decision is reviewable under the Act. This means that if you are dissatisfied with this outcome you have a right to seek a review under section 59 of the Act. This right of review extends to a review of the adequacy of the search for documents undertaken by the Directorate. If you wish to seek a review you should write to:

Executive Director
Service Strategy and Community Building
Community Services Directorate
GPO Box 158
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You have 28 days from the day you receive this notification to seek a review of the outcome or such other period as the Executive Director permits.

Under section 54 of the Act, if you are concerned about the processing of your request or related administrative matters, you may make a complaint to the Ombudsman, who may conduct an independent investigation into your complaint. There is no fee for this, and the contact details are as follows:

The Ombudsman
GPO Box 442
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Online FOI Policy

Please be aware that under the ACT Government's Online FOI Publication Policy, information released to FOI Applicants may be released on the internet.

Please note that personal information will not be made available under this policy.

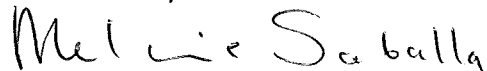
A de-identified letter will be uploaded on to the Open Government website.

A copy of the policy, with details about what information may be published on the internet, is available online at: http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/open_government.

Thank you for your request. The issue you have raised about the types of information collected and retained by the Directorate on sexual orientation is a data issue that I will follow up in the future.

If you have any queries in relation to this matter, please contact Jessica Gotovac on 6207 6547.

Yours sincerely



Melanie Saballa

Director

Service Sector

21 March 2016