

Freedom of Information

Please read this fact sheet before completing the attached application form.

Freedom of Information

The South Australian *Freedom of Information Act 1991* (FOI Act) gives you a legal right to request access to any documents held by any 'agency' that the FOI Act applies to. This includes SA Ambulance Service (SAAS).

Applications for access to documents must be made in writing in accordance with Section 13 of the FOI Act and be lodged with the agency that holds the documents. For example, SAAS does not hold hospital or SA Police files and an application to those agencies would need to be made if seeking their records.

You can use the attached form to make an application to access documents or the online Freedom of Information application form at <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/about-sa/government/FOI-application>.

Alternatively, you can send a letter or email to SAAS. Our contact details are located at the end of this factsheet.

Requesting Access to Documents

When making an FOI application, you will need to provide enough information to enable the correct documents to be identified. If you are uncertain, it is recommended that you contact the SAAS Freedom of Information Officer for assistance. Our contact details are located at the end of this factsheet.

If you are seeking access to documents relating to your own or someone else's personal affairs, you will be asked to provide proof of your identity. If you are seeking access to documents on behalf of another person relating to their personal affairs, where that person has medical capacity, you will be asked to also provide their written consent.

Access to documents can be provided in different ways, depending on how the information is stored. The different ways you can access documents include:

- inspecting documents in person at our Corporate Office in Eastwood with no copy provided
- requesting a copy of documents

Advice about how you would like to access the documents should be included in your FOI application.

How much does a FOI application cost?

In accordance with Section 13 of the FOI Act and *The South Australian Government Gazette* for the Freedom of Information Fees and Charges, an FOI application fee of \$42.00 is payable to SAAS at the time you lodge your application.

Processing charges may also be applicable. SAAS will advise you of these charges once your application is received and processing of your application has commenced.

SAAS accepts payment by electronic transfer, money order or cheque. Payment details can be found in Section 5 of the attached application form.

The online FOI application form allows for payment by credit card for FOI applications to state government agencies and is available at <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/about-sa/government/FOI-application>. If submitting your application online, SAAS can be found listed under 'Health Agencies', sub-agency 'SA Ambulance Services (SAAS)'.

Further information about fees and charges applicable under the FOI Act can be found in the *Freedom of Information (Fees and Charges) Regulations 2018* and the *South Australian Government Gazette*.

What if I have a concession card or cannot afford to pay?

If you are the holder of a current, acceptable concession card or if you can provide a valid reason why payment of the fee or charge would cause financial hardship, SAAS will waive or remit (reduce or refund) the application fee.

If you are a concession cardholder you will need to provide SAAS with evidence, such as a copy of your current concession card. Alternatively, you will need to provide reasons why the payment of a fee or charge would cause you financial hardship.

Processing Requests for Access to Documents

After receiving your application, SAAS is required to deal with it in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act and provide you with a decision in writing. This is called a Determination. The Determination will include SAAS's decision in relation to your request and, if access has been refused in full or in part, the reasons why this has occurred. SAAS will also advise you of your rights of review and appeal if you are unhappy with the determination.

In accordance with Premier and Cabinet Circular PC045, where documents are provided as a result of an FOI application for access to non-personal information, details of the application and the documents to which access is given, may be published on SAAS's public disclosure log. A copy of PC045 can be found on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website (www.dpc.sa.gov.au).

How long will it take?

A request for access will be dealt with as soon as practicable, or within 30 calendar days of it being received.

In certain circumstances SAAS may extend the timeframe for dealing with your application under section 14A of the FOI Act. SAAS will advise you within 20 calendar days if an extension is necessary, and why.

If SAAS has not extended the timeframe for dealing with your application and you do not receive a determination within 30 calendar days, the FOI Act deems that SAAS has refused your application. If this is the case, you are entitled to lodge an application for review. For further information you should speak to the SAAS Freedom of Information Officer.



Access to documents by State Members of Parliament

A Member of the South Australian Parliament who applies for access to a document held by SAAS is entitled to under the FOI Act to access the document without charge unless the work generated by the application involves fees and charges totalling more than \$1,000.

Access to patient records

A person who applies for access to patient records held by SAAS may be asked to provide identification (driver's licence, Medicare card, Centrelink card, passport etc) to confirm their identity. Persons applying on a patient's behalf may also be asked for proof of written authority from the patient.

Please also note SAAS does not hold individual patient files containing a complete record of all ambulance attendances for that person. In many cases we attend incidents where we do not know the name of the patient. You may be asked for details about the incident, such as date and location, to assist in locating the incident you require records from.

Further information

For questions specifically related to your application, contact the SAAS Freedom of Information Officer in one of the following ways:

- Phone: (08) 8274 0305
- Email: Health.SAASFOI@sa.gov.au
- Mail: Freedom of Information Officer
SA Ambulance Service
GPO Box 3
ADELAIDE SA 5001

If you require more information about how FOI operates in South Australia, please visit www.archives.sa.gov.au.

You can also download a free copy of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991* and *Freedom of Information (Fees and Charges) Regulations 2018* from the South Australian legislation website at www.legislation.sa.gov.au.



Freedom of Information Application Form

Request for Access to Documents Held by SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) under
Section 13 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1991*

Please read the attached Fact Sheet before completing and lodging your application.

(Section 1) Name of Applicant
Surname:
Given Names:
Date of Birth:
Australian <u>Postal Address</u> :
Email (optional):
Contact phone number:
The information I am requesting (please pick one): <input type="checkbox"/> Relates to myself (please attach proof of identity) (proceed to Section 3), or <input type="checkbox"/> Relates to <u>another</u> person (proceed to Section 2), or <input type="checkbox"/> Does not relate to a specific person (proceed to Section 3)
(Section 2) Details of Patient Note only complete this section if you are applying for records relating to another person
Surname:
Given Names:
Date of Birth:

Is this person:

- ☐ **Alive** (please attach proof of identity for the person whose information you are applying for and a letter authorising you access to their information)
- ☐ **Deceased** (please attach a copy of the deceased person's death certificate and Will naming the applicant as an Executor.)

Your relationship to the person:

(Section 3) Details requested

Please note, SA Ambulance Service does not hold individual patient files containing a complete record of all ambulance attendances for that person. This is as in many cases we attend incidents where we do not know the name of the patient. Please send at least the following to allow us to search for the correct incident.

Date of SA Ambulance Service attendance:

Address / Suburb of incident:

Estimated time of day:

Hospital transported to (if known):

Motor Vehicle Accidents – Location of patient in vehicle:
(eg driver, front passenger etc)

Details of information you are specifically seeking:

(Section 4) Forms of access (please pick one)

- ☐ I require a copy of the documents
- ☐ I wish to inspect the documents in person at the SA Ambulance Service Corporate Office with no copy provided

(Section 5) Application fee

The statutory application fee (\$42.00) must be submitted with the completed application form unless you are seeking a fee waiver/concession.

- ☐ Eligible for fee waiver/concession (please provide copy of valid concession card or details of financial hardship)
- ☐ Enclosed cheque / money order
- ☐ Electronic Funds Transfer to:
Account name: SA Ambulance Service Incorporated
BSB: 015-101
Account: 838563392
Reference: (your name) FOI application
(please send copy of receipt with this application)

If you wish to pay by credit card, please make your application through the following website, www.sa.gov.au/topics/about-sa/government/FOI-application.
SA Ambulance Service can be found listed under 'health and health agencies'

(Section 6) Applicant's signature

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Please submit this form one of the following ways:

Mail: Freedom of Information Officer
SA Ambulance Service
GPO Box 3
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Email: Health.SAASFOI@sa.gov.au

In person (note this is not a postal address): SA Ambulance Service Corporate Office
205 Greenhill Road
Eastwood SA