Electronic Release of Access to Information Response Packages

Financial and Administrative Shared Services Division, Access to Information and

King's Printer

Version: 2.0

Approved by: Assistant Deputy Minister, Financial and Administrative Shared Services	Owner: Executive Director, ATI and King's Printer	
Approval date: September 21, 2022	Last Reviewed: June 11, 2025	Review Date: June 2026
Contact: sartr.ati-centralintake@gov.ab.ca	Policy Instrument type: Standard	

Contents

Standard Statement

Consistent practices related to the electronic release of response packages requested under the *Access to Information Act* (ATIA) support the modernization of access to information services and increase efficiencies.

Authority

- *Access to Information Act*

Scope

This standard is applicable to access to information staff operating in, or on behalf of, Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction (including, but not limited to, Government of Alberta employees, contractors, volunteers, appointees, interns, and students working with Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction).

> **NOTE:** Employees of other Government of Alberta departments and/or public bodies (e.g., agencies, boards, and commissions) operating in Alberta are encouraged (but not required) to align with this standard.

Standard Description

This standard supports implementation of the ATIA clarifying the Government of Alberta's position regarding the electronic release of access to information response packages.

Standard Specification

As per the ATIA:

> *6(1) An applicant has a right of access to any record in the custody or under the control of a public body, including a record containing personal information about the applicant.*

Because the ATIA specifies neither the format nor the method for provision of an access to information response package to an applicant, electronic release (e.g., a PDF sent via email) is an option that is available to applicants.

The preferred format for the electronic release of an access to information response package is a Portable Document Format (PDF) format. If an alternate electronic format is required, the appropriate approvals must be obtained.

Email is the preferred method for facilitating the electronic release of access to information response packages. Certain barriers may limit and/or prevent electronic release of access to information response packages to applicants (e.g., email attachment size limit)—in these circumstances, access to information staff must collaborate with the applicant to determine the appropriate course of action. Internal approval may be necessary for alternate arrangements.

Both the access to information response package and the outgoing email to which the access to information response package is attached are official records and must be managed as such. Confirmation of an applicant receiving an electronically released access to information response package (e.g., an email response, delivery verification of encrypted digital storage device, etc.) must be retained whenever possible and managed as part of the case file.

Access to information response packages, regardless of format or the method by which they are provided to applicants, are considered Government of Alberta content, and must be managed in accordance with the relevant content management policy instruments.

Compliance

Consequences of non-compliance with this standard could result in the loss of information, damage to Government of Alberta's reputation, exposure of Albertans to harm and/or incurrence of unnecessary costs. Depending on the severity of non-compliance:

- either informal or formal requests and/or follow-ups may be made by Innovation, Privacy and Policy Division, Corporate Internal Audit Services, Cybersecurity Services, Office of the Information Privacy Commissioner, and/or Public Service Commission; and
- legislated disciplinary action (i.e., *Public Service Act*) may be taken.

References and Supporting Resources

- [Data and Information Security Classification](#)
- [Document Naming Conventions](#)
- [Safeguarding Government Information Guide](#)