**Right to Information (RTI) act 2005**

### Introduction

As we all know that a government of a country is of its people, for its people and by its people. However, this is forgotten and a government is now said to be off its people, far from the people and to buy its people. Every citizen of India has their own fundamental right to freedom and expression and have the right to know about our government. But it is not practiced. We citizens are dumb and deaf to the subject relating to information about the government. The government servants think that they are different from the common citizen of our country. Right to Information act buries the feelings of the government servants and paves way to think that they are also one among the citizen of this country. In a democratic country like India, the Right to Information act plays a very important and helpful role for the betterment of its people.

### What is Right to Information?

Right to information is a fundamental right of any citizen of India to know what is happening with the government. Every individual has the freedom to seek any government related information through this RTI act 2005. The Right to Information Act (2005) is one of the key legislation enacted by the Parliament which guarantees the right and freedom of every citizen of India to get the information related to our government dealings, both at centre and the states.

### When was this Right to Information act brought into force?

This act was passed in the Indian Parliament on 15th June 2005 and was brought into force on 12 October 2005.

### Who are connected with this Right to Information act?

This Right to Information act is applicable to all the states and Union territories of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir which has its own Right to Information act 2009. Every citizen of India has the right to seek information through this act. Only an Individual can use this RTI facility. A group or company cannot request for any information

### Which are the government offices where we can seek information through this RTI act?

The citizen of India has all the right to seek information related to the Indian constitutional authorities, viz; the executive, the legislative, judiciary, any other institution or body constituted by the act of parliament or state legislature. Any private institution financed and supported by the constitutional authorities.

### How the information is sought through this RTI act?

Every government office will have its own PIO (Public Information Officer) who is responsible to accept the request from the public and provide the information within 30 days of their request. A minimum fee is charged from the public. People from BPL (Below PovertyLine) are exempted from paying any fee to seek any information. Also there are APIOs (Assistant Public Information Officers) available in the post offices located in main cities and towns.

### What information can be obtained through this RTI act?

This act facilitates the citizen of India to obtain government documents, to inspect government documents, to inspect government works and to get the samples. (Government document means anything big to small including the Ration card, Election ID card)

### What is the time limit to get the information through this RTI act?

The time frame to obtain any information is 30 days from the date of application. If the application was submitted through APIO, then the time frame is 35 days. In the case of information relating to life and death warranting very urgent information, the information to be provided within 48 hours from the time of application

### Are there any restrictions in seeking information through this act?

There is a restriction in seeking information according to the official secret act 1923 and such information will not be revealed or provided to the citizen of India in the interest of the country's security. No information pertaining to offices and section dealing with security of the nation which will endanger the national security, security to personnel,. Like the defence, CB CID, BSF,Police etc; However, any issues relating to malfunction or corruption in the department are excluded , and can be sought through this RTI act.

### How the application or request is made to the PIO through this RTI act?

The request or application is made in a ordinary paper with minimum fee of Rs. 10/- against cash receipt. Personnel below poverty line are exempted from this. A certificate stating that the individual is from below poverty line should be provided while submitting the application. This is with regard to information related to central government. State governments have their own laid down orders and fee structures.

### How the information is provided through this RTI act?

The requested information is provided as Xeroxed copies of the original document. A sum of Rs. 2 (Rupees two only) is charged as stationery charge for A4 size paper. To obtain information in a floppy disc, a sum of Rs. 50/-(Rupees Fifty only) is charged. This may vary from state to state of India.

### What if the information was not provided within the stipulated time frame?

An appeal can be made to the appellate authority. If the first appeal is not replied, then the second appeal can be made to the Information Commission.

### What action is taken against the PIO who fails to provide information?

The officer is charged Rs. 250 per day as penalty for the delay. He is likely to be charged Rs. 25000 for providing wrong information or for denial of information, and disciplinary action will be initiated against the officer who fails to provide information and if his explanation is not duly justified.

### Are there any word limitation to make a request in this RTI act?

There is no word limitation when the act was brought into force. Now the government is thinking to impose restriction on the word limit to 500 words per application.

### Should we explain the reason for which we are seeking such information?

No. No explanation to a request is necessary and the reason for request need not be indicated.

### How many requests can be made in one application through this RTI act?

There was no mention about this in the original act. However one information in one request is suggested in the modification to this act.

### Conclusion

Right to information act helps the citizen to exercise their fundamental right to get information without any denial from the authorities. It helps the people to get the information pertaining to self relating to the government. It also helps to find out the corrupt functioning of the government and its officials. It keeps a check on government to conduct its business in a very fair manner. This act creates a fear in the minds of government servants to think and work that they are the servants of the people of this nation.

Many government scandals have been brought out to light with the help of this good act. This Right to Information act has been conceived and delivered in a better shape that will lead India to move forward by reducing corruption in government departments. With this a government servant recognizes and respects the citizen of India and the government fears its people for wrong doings.