

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005

Right to Information is among the fundamental rights of citizens of any democratically governed Nation State. It acquires special importance in a Representative Democracy, where citizens are supposed to make 'Informed Opinions' about the process of governance. The law came as a surprise to a bureaucracy used to working under the paradigm of Official Secrets Act, 1923.

The Right to Information Act, 2005 comes into force on the 12th October 2005 (120th day of its enactment on 15th June, 2005). Following provisions have come into force with immediate effect:-

- Obligations of public authorities [S.4(1)],
- Designation of Public Information Officers and Assistant Public Information Officers [S.5(1) and 5(2)],
- Constitution of Central Information Commission (S.12 and 13),
- Constitution of State Information Commissioner (S.15 and 16),
- Non-applicability of the Act to Intelligence and Security Organizations (S.24) and
- Power to make rules to carry out the provisions of the Act (S.27 and 28).

The Act extends to the whole of India except the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Information means any material in any form including records, documents, memos, e-mails, opinions, advices, press releases, circulars, orders, logbooks, contracts, reports, papers, samples, models, data material held in any electronic form and information relating to any private body which can be accessed by a public authority under any other law for the time being in force.

Right to Information includes the right to –

1. Inspect works, documents, and records.
2. Take notes, extracts or certified copies of documents or records.
3. Take certified samples of material.
4. Obtain information in form of printouts, diskettes, floppies, tapes, and videocassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts.