

# Government of Ghana



## Table of Contents

<b>1. Overview .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Purpose of the Manual.....	3
<b>2. Divisions and Departments/Units under Forestry Commission (FC).....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Vision of Forestry Commission .....	4
2.2 Mission of Forestry Commission .....	4
2.3 Description of Activities of each Division, Department and Units.....	6
2.3.1 Wildlife Division.....	6
2.3.2 Forestry Services Division.....	7
2.3.3 Timber Industry Division.....	7
2.3.4 Human Resource Department.....	8
2.3.5 Finance and Administration Department.....	8
2.3.6 Internal Audit Department.....	8
2.3.7 Legal Department .....	9
2.3.8 Corporate Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Department.....	10
2.3.9 Climate Change Department.....	10
2.3.10 Timber Valuation Department.....	10
2.3.11 Information Communication Technology Department.....	10
2.3.12 Compliance Unit.....	11
2.3.13 Donor Relation Unit .....	11
2.3.14 Timber Right Administration Unit .....	12
2.3.15 Rapid Response Unit .....	12
2.3.16 Resources Management Support Center.....	12
2.3.17 Forestry Commission Training Center.....	13
2.3.18 Corporate Affairs and Media Relation Unit .....	13
2.3.19 London Office.....	14
2.4 Forestry Commission’s Organogram.....	1
2.5 Classes and Types of Information.....	1
<b>3. Processing and Decision on Application – S. 23 .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. Amendment of Personal Record .....</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1 How to apply for an Amendment.....	3
<b>5. Fees and Charges for Access to Information.....</b>	<b>4</b>

**6. Appendix A: Standard RTI Request Form ..... 6**

**7. Appendix B: Contact Details of Forestry Commission’s Information Unit..... 9**

**8. Appendix C: Acronyms ..... 10**

**9. Appendix D: Glossary..... 11**

## **1. Overview**

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This Right to Information (RTI) Manual is pursuant to the provisions of the recently passed Act, (Act 989) by Parliament and assented to by the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo. The Act gives substance to the constitutional right to information provided under Article 21 (1) (f) of the Constitution, enabling citizens access to official information held by government institutions, and the qualifications and conditions under which the access may be obtained. In accordance with Section 80, the Act applies to information that came into existence before, or which will come into existence after the commencement of the Act.

**1.1 Purpose of Manual** – To inform/assist the public on the organizational structure, responsibilities, and activities of the Forestry Commission (FC) and provide the types of information and classes of information available at FC, including the location and contact details of its information officers and units.

## **2. Divisions and Departments/ Unit under Forestry Commission (FC)**

This section describes the Forestry Commission’s vision and mission and lists the names of all Divisions, Departments/Units under the institution, including the description of organizational structure, responsibilities, details of activities and classes, and types of information accessible at a fee.

### **2.1 VISION OF FORESTRY COMMISSION**

“Leave future generations and their communities with richer, better, more valuable forest and wildlife endowments than we inherited”.

### **2.2 MISSION OF FORESTRY COMMISSION**

Sustainably develop and manage Ghana’s forest and wildlife resources.

#### **Divisions and Departments/ Units under Forestry Commission (FC)**

Forestry Commission has three (3) main Divisions (Wildlife Division, Forestry Services Division and Timber Industry Development Division) Departments/Units, two (2) Centers and a London office.

1. Wildlife Division
2. Forestry Services Division
3. Timber Industry Division
4. Human Resource Department
5. Finance and Administration Department
6. Internal Audit Department
7. Legal Department
8. Corporate Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Department
9. Climate Change Department

10. Timber Valuation Department
11. Information Communication Technology Department
12. Compliance Unit
13. Donor Relations Unit
14. Timber Right Administration Unit
15. Rapid Response Unit
16. Resources Management Support Centre
17. Forestry Commission Training Center
18. Corporate Affairs and Media Relations Unit
19. London Office

**Responsibilities of Forestry Commission:**

The objectives of the Forestry Commission are:

1. Coordinating, implementing as well as enforcing policies, laws, and regulations on development, management and regulation of the utilization of forest and wildlife resources.
2. Assisting the private sector and other bodies with the implementation of forest and wildlife policies
3. Promotion of public awareness on forest and wildlife management.
4. Advising and providing technical services with regards to matters of resource protection, management, and development of market intelligence pertaining to forest and wildlife industries
5. Advising and providing technical services for forest plantation for the restoration of degraded forests and environmental conservation in general.
6. Advising and providing technical services on wild animal breeding facilities for restocking

depleted areas and improving wild animal availability to the general public.

7. The coordination of policies related to the conservation, management, and development of forest and wildlife resources.

8. We are responsible for conducting the pre-shipment inspection for forest and wildlife resources.

### 2.3 Description of Activities of each Division and Department/Units

Divisions and Departments /Units	Responsibilities/Activities
<p><b>2.3.1 Wildlife Division</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manages the nations Protected Areas.</li> <li>2. Regulates the utilization of wildlife resources.</li> <li>3. Assists the private sector and other agencies in the implementation of wildlife policy.</li> <li>4. Promotes public awareness, education, communication, and support for wildlife conservation.</li> <li>5. Promotes eco-tourism development in our Protected Areas.</li> <li>6. Develop the wildlife management capacity at the national, district and community level including stakeholders' participation in the effective management of wildlife within and outside the Protected Areas.</li> <li>7. Restores and expands Ghana wildlife resource base.</li> <li>8. Facilitates research for continuous wildlife improvement.</li> </ol>

<p><b>2.3.2 Forestry Services Division</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Protects, manages and develop forest resources in the national interest for the benefit of owners.</li> <li>2. Establishes planning systems for the protection, harvesting and development of the forest reserves in a sustainable manner.</li> <li>3. Provides management and technical services with regard to matters of protection.</li> <li>4. Promotes public awareness, understanding, and support for forest resources conservation.</li> <li>5. Regulates the harvesting of forest resources.</li> <li>6. Facilitates the development of plantations.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2.3.3 Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Marketing and promotion of the timber trade, the development, promotion, utilization and marketing of wood products.</li> <li>2. Inspection and monitoring of the importation of timber wood products; Ensuring the effective development and dissemination of appropriate timber industry standards, grading rules, and trade regulations, providing management and technical training for the wood industry and undertaking the certification and registration of authorized timber grades and establishing levels of certification for such graders.</li> <li>3. Industry Development: advice on approval to establish new processing incentives to promote efficiency and value addition in the timber industry, as well as providing technical and advisory services to help the timber industry build capacity.</li> </ol>



<b>2.3.4 Human Resource Department</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruitment and Selection</li> <li>2. Employee Resourcing</li> <li>3. Human Resource Information Management System (HRIMS)</li> <li>4. Organizational Development</li> <li>5. Learning and Development.</li> </ol>
<b>2.3.5 Finance and Administration Department</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advise the Management of the Forestry Commission on all financial matters.</li> <li>2. Provide accurate, timely, and relevant information to the Management of the Forestry Commission for decision making.</li> <li>3. Prepare and present the Commission's annual accounts for auditing as well as its financial plans for the following year.</li> <li>4. Preparation of routine accounting statements and budget for the Management and Board of Commissioners.</li> </ol>
<b>2.3.6 Internal Audit Department</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Periodically report to the Board, Management, Chief Executive, and the Audit Committee relating to the outcome of audit activities, issues found and recommendations made;</li> <li>2. Evaluate and assess independently, from the internal control and risk perspectives, significant organization, process, systems, and policy changes that are incidental to the growth and expansion of the, working with the Compliance Units in the process;</li> <li>3. Assist in identifying control weaknesses against strategic and operational risks, recommending enhancement of existing control measures and or development of new control measures, and monitoring</li> </ol>

	<p>the effectiveness of those measures; and</p> <p>4. Provide input in the development and update of the Commission's Risk Management Policy and Risk Register in the light of risks identified during the conduct of internal audit activities.</p>
<p><b>2.3.7 Legal Department</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secretariat to the Board of Commissioners</li> <li>2. Secretary to EMT</li> <li>3. Represents the Commission in all legal matters</li> <li>4. Draft agreements for and on behalf of the Commission.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2.3.8 Corporate Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Department.</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leads and directs the corporate planning processes to develop and maintain efficient procedures for the preparation of Corporate Plans and Policies for the Commission.</li> <li>2. Leads the Evaluation, Monitoring, and Reporting of Corporate Performance of the Corporate Plan and directs the Collation, Analysis, and Use of Corporate data for decision making and Corporate Improvement.</li> <li>3. Develops and rollouts of a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation System for the Commission by developing a framework and translating it into an M&amp;E System that encompasses the entire cycle of Programme Design, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.</li> <li>4. Manages the Commission's Statistics, Research, and Information Management Unit for forestry and wildlife statistical data collection and management for credible decision making.</li> </ol>

<p><b>2.3.9 Climate Change Department</b></p>	<p>The core mandate of the climate change department is to assist the Forestry Commission to achieve its overall mission and vision by designing climate change mitigation/adaptation plans and strategies for the Forestry Sector of Ghana while promoting sustainable development.</p>
<p><b>2.3.10 Timber Validation Department</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and maintain a robust wood tracking system that enables the collation and reconciliation of all data accruing from sector activities for the purpose of ascertaining legal compliance for the issuing of a legality license.</li> <li>2. Develop and maintain efficient procedures for an effective Legal Timber Monitoring regime for the Forestry Commission.</li> <li>3. Ensure that overall requirements under the VPA necessary to sustain trade with Ghana's export market are achieved.</li> <li>4. Provide leadership in the country to prepare for the periodic review of Voluntary Partnership Agreement under Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism (JMRM).</li> </ol>
<p><b>2.3.11 Information Communication Technology Department</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ICT as a forefront to inform FC Policy Decisions and drive Mission, Vision, Objectives and strategies</li> <li>2. Plan, Manage and Coordinate Emerging Technologies and ICT Zonal Activities.</li> <li>3. Develop, Implement and Maintain Software Applications to Improve and manage Forest and Wildlife Resources.</li> </ol>

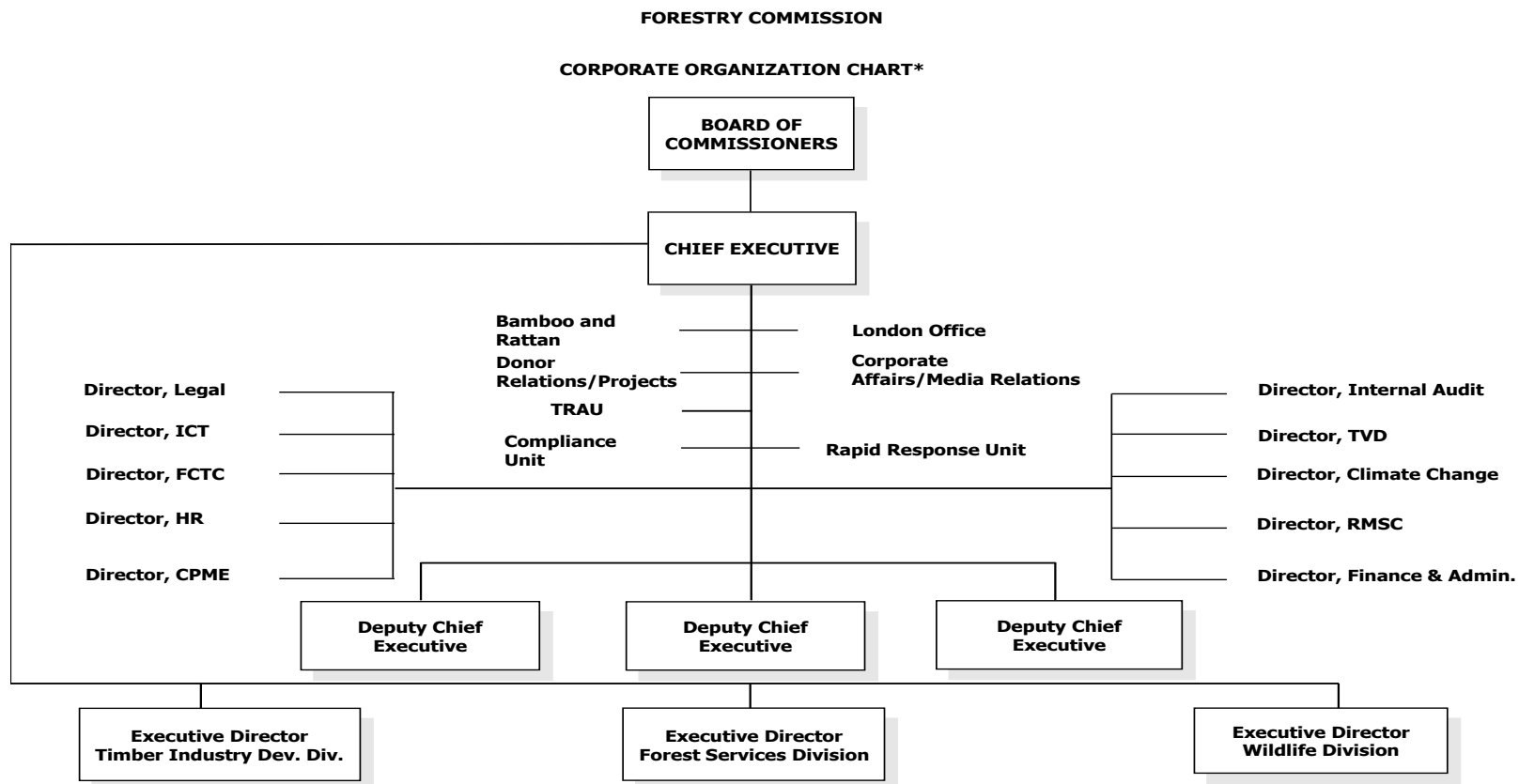
	<p>4. Develop, Upgrade and Manage Network and System Infrastructures in Forestry Commission.</p>
<p><b>2.3.12 Compliance Unit</b></p>	<p>1. Implement standards and procedures to ensure that compliance with programs requirements throughout the organization are effective and efficient in identifying, preventing, detecting and correcting non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations,</p> <p>2. Assist the Organization on policy and regulatory matters, including risk assessments, monitory and reporting.</p> <p>3. Design and, monitor control system to address cases of violation of internal business policies and regulations.</p> <p>4. Develop and implement programmers and procedures that encourage managers and employees to report suspected fraud and other improprieties, without fear of reprisal attacks.</p> <p>5. Lead working groups on new regulatory requirements affecting the activities of the organization.</p>
<p><b>2.3.13 Donor Relations Unit</b></p>	<p>1. Liaise and coordinate with Development partners with regard to implementation support missions.</p> <p>2. Coordinate all projects at Forestry Commission.</p>

	<p>3. Write and develop new project proposals.</p> <p>4. Source development partners funding support for projects and programs</p>
<b>2.3.14 Timber Right Administration Unit (TRAU)</b>	<p>1. The development and management of system for the effective conduct of competitive bidding for Natural and Plantation Forest Timber Utilization Contracts.</p> <p>3. Managing and updating of concessions and Timber Utilization Contracts (TUCs) database for management decisions.</p> <p>4. Facilitate programs/ plans of Timber Rights Evaluation Committee (TREC).</p> <p>5. Translating TREC decisions into plans and action for implementation.</p> <p>6. Regulating access to mineral resources in Production Area in Forest Reserves.</p>
<b>2.3.15 Rapid Response Unit (RRU)</b>	<p>1. Identify illegal hotspot activities across Forest Reserves, Wildlife Protected Areas, and off-reserve areas across the country in collaboration with FSD, WD, TIDD.</p> <p>2. Undertake monthly deployment of all Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) to identified illegal hotspots areas for enforcement of forestry and wildlife laws.</p>
<b>2.3.16 Resource Management Support Center (RMSC)</b>	<p>1. Provide training and assist Divisions/Units of Forestry Commission and other organizations to improve implementation of integrated forest and</p>

	<p>wildlife management systems.</p> <p>2. Provide data information and technical guidance for forest management planning, implementation, and forestry industry development</p> <p>3. Ensure adherence to forest and wildlife management prescriptions and provide updates on the state of the nation's forest and wildlife resources.</p> <p>4. Develop and review MOPs and port harvesting checks.</p> <p>5. Provide quality control measures to ensure adoption of certified forest and wildlife systems.</p> <p>6. Assist Forest districts to prepare management plans for all forest and wildlife</p>
<p><b>2.3.17 Forestry Commission Training Center</b></p>	<p>1. To equip all categories of FC staff with the requisite skills, knowledge, and core competencies required for the effective performance of their current jobs and for career development aimed at achieving the business goals and strategic objective of the Commission.</p> <p>2. To build the capacity of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in forest, wildlife and tertiary wood processing to reduce poverty.</p>
<p><b>2.3.18 Corporate Affairs and Media Relations Unit</b></p>	<p>1. Protect and promote the image of the Commission by ensuring the free flow of information to the Commission's public.</p> <p>2. Environmental Scanning-media monitoring (Radio, TV, Newspapers, Online, Magazines, Internet) issues</p>

	<p>here can directly or indirectly have both positive and negative effects on the organization. This prepares the organization for re-positioning and influences decisions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Media Relations-Media interactions.</li> <li>4. Copywriting and Editing.</li> <li>5. Manages the Commission's website and social media handles in collaboration with the ICT Unit.</li> </ol>
<p><b>2.3.19 London Office</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developing strategies to improve the image of the Ghana forestry sector through an effective relationship with the media, trade associations, and international organizations.</li> <li>2. Develop and promote eco-tourism for Ghana internationally</li> <li>3. Effectively disseminate contemporary market information to stakeholders in the Ghana wood processing sector.</li> <li>4. Liaise with specialized research institutions for the development, promotion, and marketing of lesser-used timber (LUT) species.</li> <li>5. Design strategies to promote investment opportunities in commercial plantation development and development of eco-parks in Ghana</li> <li>6. Develop trade exhibitions, trade, and investment opportunities fairs, and technical conferences.</li> <li>7. Develop strategies to create awareness about Ghana FLEGT VPA overseas prior to expecting FLEGT licensed wood.</li> <li>8. Promote Forestry Commissions Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) protocols and their implementation.</li> </ol>

## 2.4 Forestry Commission’s Organogram



\*Chart denotes structure, not the relative worth of positions



## 2.5 Classes and Types of information

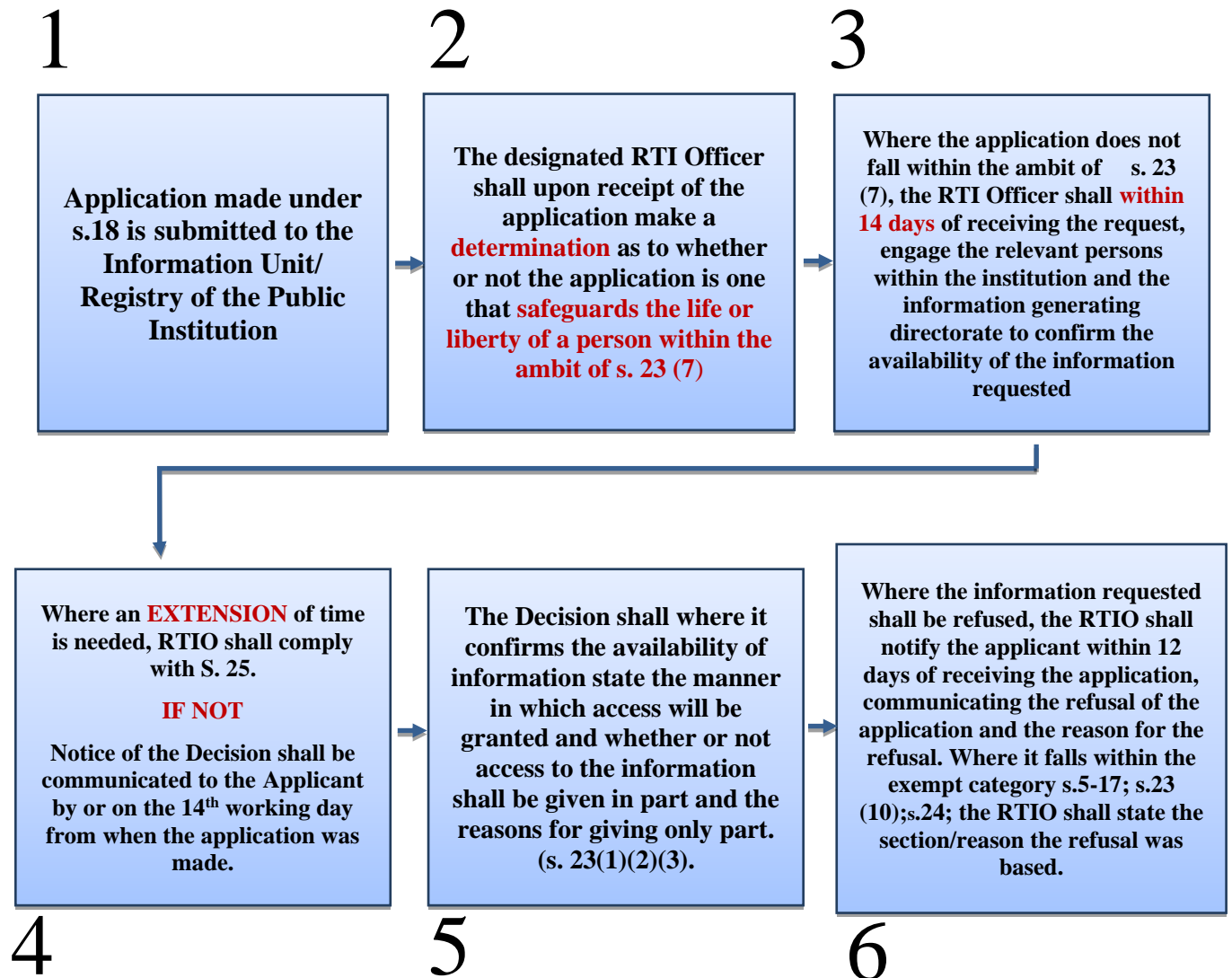
<b>List of various classes of information in the custody of the institution:</b>
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Not Applicable
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<b>Types of Information Accessible at a fee:</b>
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Not Applicable.
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## 1. Processing and Decision on Application – S. 23



## **2. Amendment of Personal Record**

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A person given access to the information contained in records of a public institution may apply for an amendment of the information if the information represents the personal records of that person and in the person's opinion, the information is incorrect, misleading, incomplete, or out of date.

### **4.1 How to apply for an Amendment**

- a. The application should be in writing indicating;
  - Name and proof of identity.
  - Particulars that will enable the records of the public institution to identify the applicant
  - The incorrect, misleading, incomplete, or out-of-date information in the record.
  - Signature of the applicant
- b. For incomplete information claimed or out of date records, the application should be accompanied with the relevant information which the applicant considers necessary to complete the records.
- c. The address to which notice shall be sent should be indicated.
- d. The application can then be submitted at the office of the public institution

### **3. Fees and Charges for Access to Information**

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The Act mandates Parliament in Section 75 to approve a fee that public institutions can charge. However, fees shall apply to only the three circumstances stated below:

- Request for information in a language other than the language in which the information is held. (s.75) (3).
- When a request is made for a written transcript of the information, a reasonable transcription cost may be requested by the Information Officer. (s.75) (4).
- Cost of media conversion or reformatting. (s.75) (5).

**Under Section 75 (2), fees are not payable for:**

- reproduction of personal information
- information in the public interest
- information that should be provided within stipulated time under the Act
- an applicant who is poor or has a disability
- time spent by the information officer in reviewing the information
- time spent by the information officer to examine and ensure the information is not exempt
- preparing the information

Section 76 subjects the retention of charges received by a public institution to the Constitution. Thus, a public institution is authorized to retain charges received under the Act to be used only to defray expenses incurred by the public institution in the performance of functions under the Act and be paid into a bank account opened for the purpose with the approval of the Controller and Accountant-General.



## 4. Appendix A: Standard RTI Request Form

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[Reference No.: .....]

**APPLICATION FOR ACCESS TO INFORMATION UNDER THE RIGHT TO  
INFORMATION ACT, 2019 (ACT 989)**



	<b>Name of Applicant:</b>			
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>			
<b>3.</b>	<b>Public Institution:</b>			
<b>4.</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>	<b>DD</b>	<b>MM</b>	<b>YYYY</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Type of Applicant:</b>	Individual <input type="checkbox"/>	Organization/Institution	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6.</b>	<b>TIN Number</b>			
<b>7.</b>	<b>If Represented, Name of Representative:</b>			
<b>7 (a).</b>	<b>Capacity of Representative:</b>			
<b>8.</b>	Type of Identification:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	National ID Card	Passport
			Driver's License	Voter's ID
<b>8 (a).</b>	<b>Id. No.:</b>			
<b>9.</b>	<b>Description of the Information being sought (specify the type and class of information including cover dates. Kindly fill multiple applications for multiple requests):</b>			

<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Manner of Access:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Inspection of Information</b></p> <p><b>Copy of Information</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Viewing / Listen</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Written Transcript</b></p> <p>Translated (specify language) <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 150px; height: 20px; vertical-align: middle;"></span></p>
<p><b>10 (a).</b></p>	<p><b>Form of Access:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hard copy</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Electronic copy</b>   <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Braille</b></p>
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Contact Details:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Email Address _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Postal Address _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Tel: _____</p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Applicant’s signature/thumbprint:</b></p>	
<p><b>13.</b></p>	<p><b>Signature of Witness (where applicable)</b></p> <p><b>“This request was read to the applicant in the language the applicant understands and the applicant appeared to have understood the content of the request.”</b></p>	



**5. Appendix B: Contact Details of FC's Information Unit**

**Name of Information/Designated Officer:**

Abdul Rashid Abubakari

**Telephone/Mobile number of Information Unit:**

030 240 1210

**Postal Address of the institution:**

P.O. Box MB 434 Accra, Ghana

## 6. Appendix C: Acronyms

Table 1 Acronyms

Acronym	Literal Translation
CCD	Climate Change Directorates
EMT	Executive Management Team
FC	Forestry Commission
FSD	Forestry Services Division
FCTC	Forestry Commission Training Center
GCFRP	Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme
GhLAS	Ghana Legality Assurance System
HRIMS	Human Resource Information Management System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDA	Ministries, Departments, and Agencies
MTS	Modified Taungya System
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LI	Legislative Instrument
RTI	Right to Information
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RMSC	Resource Management Support Center
RRT	Rapid Response Teams
SRA	Social Responsibilities Agreement
TIDD	Timber Industry Development Division
TVD	Timber Valuation Department
JMRM	Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WD	Wildlife Division
YAP	Youth in Afforestation Programme

## 7. Appendix D: Glossary

This Glossary presents clear and concise definitions for terms used in this manual that may be unfamiliar to readers listed in alphabetical order. Definitions for terms are based on section 84 of the RTI Act.

Table 2 Glossary

Term	Definition
Access	Right to Information
Access to information	Right to obtain information from public institutions
Contact details	Information by which an applicant and an information officer may be contacted
Court	A court of competent jurisdiction
Designated officer	An officer designated for the purposes of the Act who perform a similar role as the information officer
Exempt information	Information that falls within any of the exemptions specified in sections 5 to 16 of the Act
Function	Powers and duties
Government	Any authority by which the executive authority of the Republic of Ghana is duly exercised
Information	Information according to the Act includes recorded matter or material regardless of form or medium in the possession or under the control or custody of a public institution whether or not it was created by the public institution, and in the case of a private body, relates to the performance of a public function.
Information officer	The information officer of a public institution or the officer designated to whom an application is made
Public	Used throughout this document to refer to a person who requires and/or has acquired access to information.
Public institution	Includes a private institution or organization that receives public resources or provides a public function
Right to information	The right assigned to access information
Section	Different parts of the RTI Act

