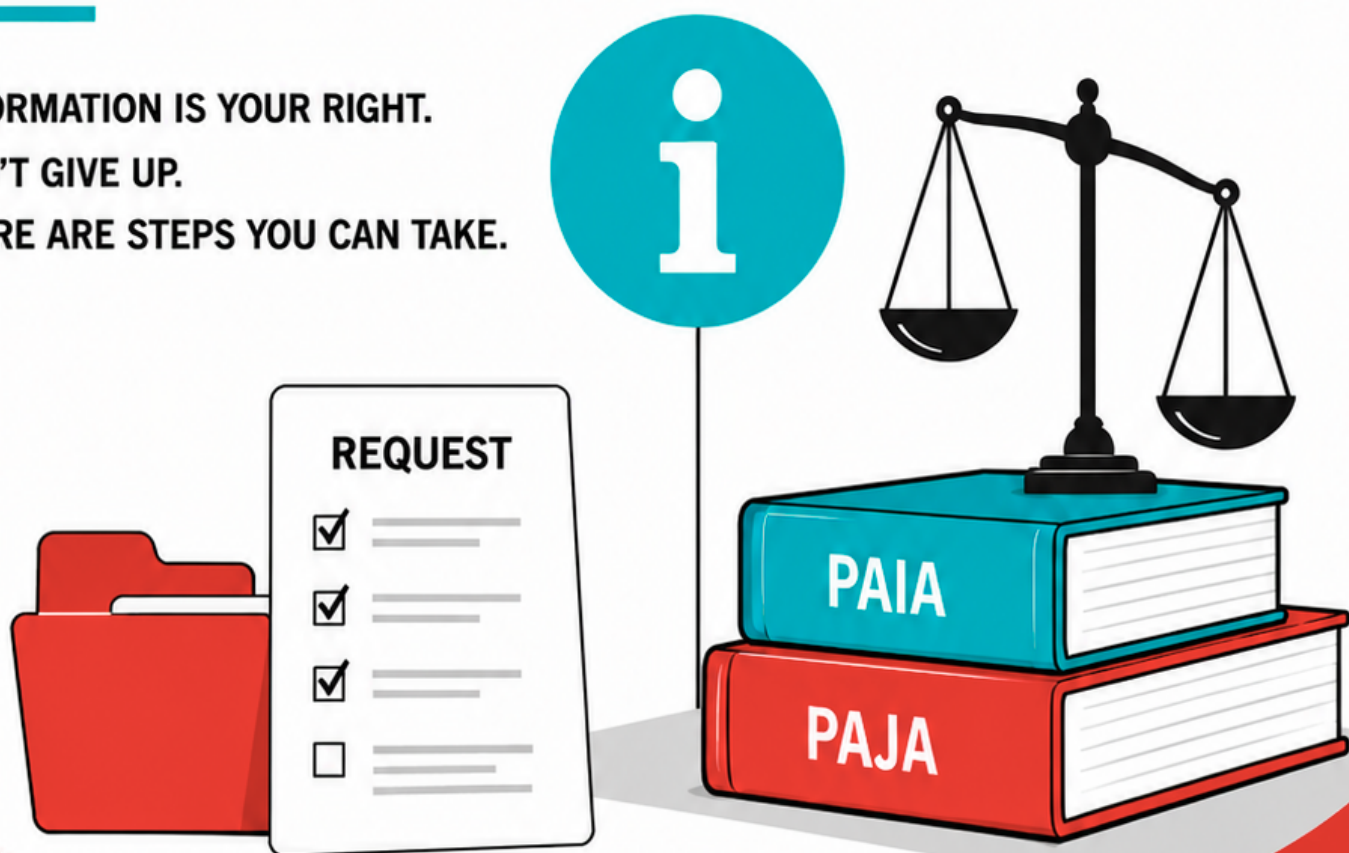


WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE DENIED INFORMATION

INFORMATION IS YOUR RIGHT.
DON'T GIVE UP.
THERE ARE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE.



REVIEW THE REASON

Understand why
your request
was denied.



ASK FOR CLARIFICATION

Request more detail
in writing.



APPEAL TO THE INFORMATION OFFICER

Submit an internal
appeal within
60 days.



APPEAL TO THE INFORMATION REGULATOR

Lodge an external
appeal within
180 days.



SEEK HELP

Contact Corruption
Watch or a legal
adviser for
assistance.



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION. DON'T BE SILENT. TAKE ACTION.

YOUR RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION (PAIA)



WHAT IS PAIA?

PAIA is a law that gives you the right to request information.

The Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) gives effect to Section 32 of the Constitution, giving everyone the right to access information held by public bodies and, in certain circumstances, private bodies.

WHO MUST GIVE YOU INFORMATION?



PUBLIC BODIES

- Government departments
- Municipalities
- Public entities



PRIVATE BODIES

- Companies
- NGOs
- Private organisations



You **do not** need to explain why you need the information.



You **must** explain which constitutional right you want to protect.



WHY IT MATTERS

PAIA promotes transparency and helps people hold institutions accountable.

WHERE TO GET HELP AND SUPPORT

If you need help making a request or appealing a decision, these institutions can assist you.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

There are organisations ready to help you exercise your right to information.



1

DEFINE YOUR REQUEST

Be clear and specific about the document or information you want.



2

IDENTIFY THE INFORMATION OFFICER

Find out who the information officer is at the public or private body and confirm their contact details.



3

SUBMIT YOUR REQUEST

Complete the relevant form and send it via email, post or hand delivery.



4

PAY THE FEES

A request fee is payable when you submit your application. An access fee is payable for copies of records (viewing is free).



5

WAIT FOR A RESPONSE

The information officer must respond within 30 days. A once-off extension of 30 days may be granted in certain circumstances.



6

RECEIVE THE DECISION

You will be informed if your request is granted in full, granted in part (with redactions), or refused, along with the reasons.



7

APPEAL OR ESCALATE

If refused, you can appeal (for public bodies) or escalate the matter to the Information Regulator. See next page.



GOOD TO KNOW

Some information may be refused to protect state security, commercial confidentiality or third-party privacy. Where only part of a document is sensitive, the rest must be released (severability).

IF YOUR REQUEST IS REFUSED

PAIA gives you the right to challenge a decision and seek access to information.



YOU CAN APPEAL

If your request is refused, you can appeal to the Information Officer.

THE APPEAL PROCESS

1



APPEAL TO THE INFORMATION OFFICER

Submit your internal appeal within 60 days of the refusal.



2



DECISION ON APPEAL

The Information Officer must respond within 30 days.



GOOD TO KNOW

If you are still not satisfied with the decision, you can escalate the matter to the Information Regulator.

WHERE TO GET HELP AND SUPPORT

If you need help making a request or appealing a decision, these institutions can assist you.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE

There are organisations ready to help you exercise your right to information.

WHO CAN HELP?



INFORMATION OFFICER

Your first point of contact at the public or private body.



INFORMATION REGULATOR

Handles external appeals and ensures compliance with PAIA.



CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Provide advice, support and guidance on access to information.



GOOD TO KNOW

Assistance is available free of charge.
You have the right to information and support.

PROMOTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE ACT (PAJA)

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (PAJA) enforces Section 33 of the Constitution, which provides that:



- Everyone has the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair.
- Anyone whose rights are negatively affected by administrative action has the right to be given written reasons.

WHAT IS “ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION”?

It refers to decisions made by the administration – that is, all government institutions and related entities, including:



National, provincial, and municipal departments.



Parliament, the Presidency, and constitutional bodies.



Public entities, parastatals, and SETAs.



Universities, cultural institutions, museums, theatres, etc.

EXAMPLES:



Applying for an ID document.



Applying for an electricity connection.



Approval or rejection of a building plan.



WHY IT MATTERS

PAJA protects you from unfair or arbitrary decisions by ensuring that government and related institutions act lawfully, fairly, and transparently.



DUTIES OF ADMINISTRATORS

Before taking any decision that affects people's rights, administrators must:



1. INFORM AFFECTED INDIVIDUALS

Tell people about the intended action and how it may affect them.



2. ALLOW ADEQUATE TIME FOR RESPONSES

Give people enough time to understand the decision and to respond.



3. FOLLOW A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS

Apply the rules consistently and without bias.



4. PROVIDE CLEAR REASONS FOR THE DECISION

Give written reasons that explain why the decision was made.



5. INFORM INDIVIDUALS OF THEIR RIGHT TO APPEAL OR REVIEW

Explain how they can challenge the decision if they disagree with it.



If no internal appeal process exists, you may ask a court to review the decision.

REQUESTING WRITTEN REASONS

You may request reasons for a decision that negatively affects your rights within 90 days of being informed of the decision.

YOUR WRITTEN REQUEST SHOULD INCLUDE:



The decision you are questioning.



Why you believe the decision is incorrect or unfair.



Your contact information.



RESPONSE TIME

The administrator must respond with written reasons within 90 days of receiving your request.



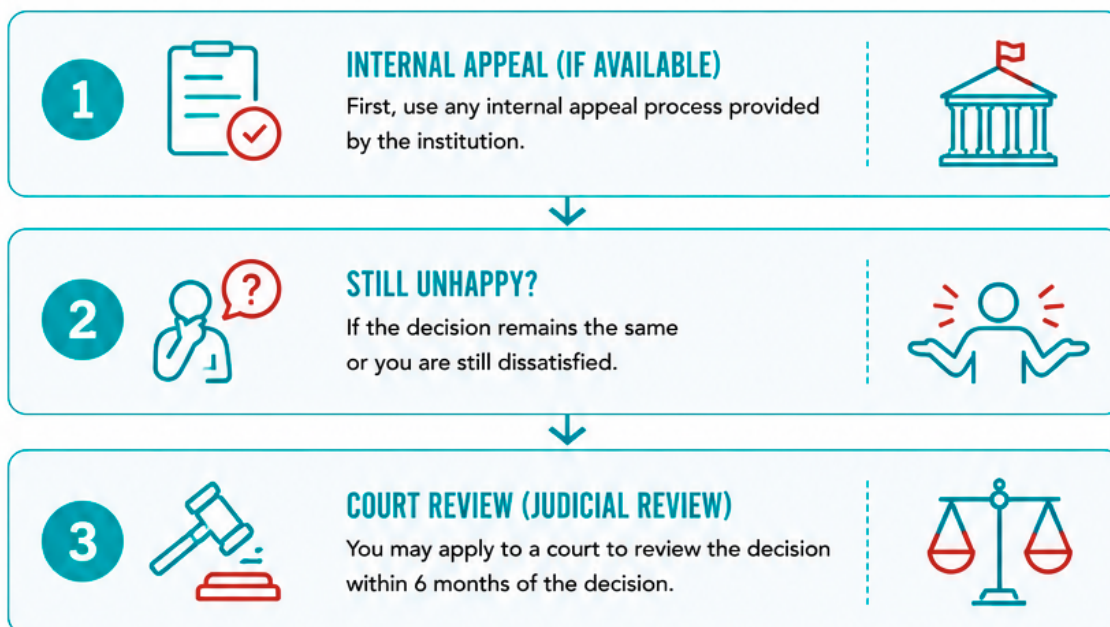
IMPORTANT

Written reasons help you understand the decision and decide whether to appeal or take further action. They promote accountability and transparency.



IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED

If you are unhappy with the decision or with the reasons given, you have options. Follow the steps below.



TRY LOCAL REMEDIES FIRST

Court reviews can be costly and time-consuming. Try these local options first:

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  <p>1. WARD COUNCILLOR
Talk to your ward councillor about the problem. They can raise the issue on your behalf.</p> |  <p>2. MUNICIPAL MANAGER
Approach the municipal manager to seek assistance and request a review of the decision.</p> |  <p>3. PROVINCIAL MEC
Contact the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for the department for help or intervention.</p> |  <p>4. OVERSIGHT BODIES & POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES
Seek help from oversight bodies, political parties, or community organisations in your area.</p> |
|---|--|--|--|



**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.
USE THEM.
HOLD DECISIONS TO ACCOUNT.**

PAJA ensures that government and related institutions act lawfully, reasonably, and fairly. By understanding your rights and using the available remedies, you help build a more accountable and just society.

