

RTI Quick Reference Cheat Sheet

Everything a citizen needs to file an RTI under the Right to Information Act, 2005 — on one page.

FEE STRUCTURE

Filing fee: ■10 per application (cash / IPO / DD / online)

BPL waiver: Below Poverty Line applicants — **zero fee** (attach BPL card copy)

Copy charges: ■2 per page after first 50 pages

Inspection fee: No charge for first hour; ■5 per hour thereafter

No fee for delay: If PIO misses 30-day deadline, copies are **free** under §7(6)

§8 EXEMPTIONS AT A GLANCE

§8(1)(a) Sovereignty / security

§8(1)(b) Contempt of court

§8(1)(c) Parliamentary privilege

§8(1)(d) Commercial confidence / trade secrets

§8(1)(e) Fiduciary relationship

§8(1)(f) Information received in confidence from foreign govt

§8(1)(g) Would endanger life / physical safety

§8(1)(h) Impede investigation / prosecution

§8(1)(i) Cabinet papers / deliberative process

§8(1)(j) Personal information (unrelated to public interest)

Note: Exemptions expire after 20 years (§8(3)). They must be read narrowly.

USEFUL URLS

Central govt online filing: rtionline.gov.in

AI-assisted drafting:

righttoinformation.wiki/tools/ai-rti-draft-app.html

First appeal builder:

righttoinformation.wiki/tools/first-appeal-app.html

State portals: righttoinformation.wiki/state-rti-portals-directory

TIME LIMITS

Standard reply window: 30 days from receipt

Life/liberty matter: 48 hours (§7(1) proviso)

First appeal (FAA): File within 30 days of refusal / no reply

FAA must decide: within 30 days (extendable to 45 days)

Second appeal (CIC/SIC): File within 90 days of FAA order

Commission decides: within 90 days (best-effort)

§20 PENALTY RANGE

§20(1) penalty: ■250 per day of delay

Maximum penalty: ■25,000 per application

Who pays: The defaulting PIO personally

Compensation: CIC can award additional compensation for detriment

Disciplinary action: CIC can recommend departmental proceedings

HOW TO USE THIS SHEET

1. Identify the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the department.
2. Draft your RTI question — be specific, ask for records not opinions.
3. Attach ■10 IPO / online payment proof.
4. If no reply in 30 days → First Appeal immediately.
5. If FAA fails → Second Appeal to CIC/SIC within 90 days.

This sheet is NOT legal advice. Always verify current rules at rtionline.gov.in.