

## Why is Access to Information Important?

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Access to information is crucial to ensure a democratic society. It helps to facilitate public knowledge of issues and promotes discussion. Requests for access to information have been used in countries around the world to reveal corrupt

## What is the new Access to Information Act 2002?

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Before 2002 the public had no general right to request information held by all public authorities in Government unless an Act specifically set up a register or procedure to request information.

The New Access to Information Act 2002 gives people the general right to information held by the Jamaican Government. This right is an ENFORCEABLE right that may be tested before an Appeals Tribunal established by the Act and in the Supreme Court.

Information may only be withheld if the Government can show that it falls within the exceptions provided by the Act and that release of this information will cause harm.

It is crucial for the successful implementation and enforcement of this Act that it is used by members of the public, professional groups and non-governmental and community based organizations to obtain information that will underpin their issues, interests and campaigns.

## What is the Volunteer Attorneys