
EXTERNAL RELEASE OF INFORMATION POLICY

Background and Purpose

To establish and use existing systems to support public access to information and the framework that governs the external release of information held by WorkCover WA, without the need for a formal application under the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

Scope

This policy applies to the release of the following types of information:

- unit level data and aggregate data
- an individual's workers compensation claims history
- employer policy coverage information including the identity of an insurer (if any) as per section 503(2) of the *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023* (WCIMA23).

This policy does not apply to:

- the release of noise induced hearing loss apportionment issues
- court requests including subpoenas, summons or notice to produce
- the release of personal information relating to WorkCover WA staff
- areas where express authority is provided for in the WCIMA23 notwithstanding section 503(2).

Policy / Policy Statements

This policy is to inform stakeholders of the principles and processes undertaken by WorkCover WA when a request is received for the release of information. It aims to outline the constraints of the information held and provides provisions for the format of information that will be released.

WorkCover WA recognises that high quality information is essential for enabling members of the public and external stakeholders to have access to the workers compensation scheme in Western Australia.

WorkCover WA maintains the right to refuse or redact information accessed under the External Release of Information Policy. Access may be refused or redacted where:

- the information is irrelevant or out of scope of the request
- the release would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest
- the request is not in accordance with this policy
- to protect an individual's privacy
- to prevent disclosure of confidential or sensitive information.

Principles

WorkCover WA is committed to transparency and open access to information. Where a written request for information is received, we will consider the following principles in determining the way in which information is to be released:

Fit for purpose

Refers to the specific details of the request and the characteristics of the information to be provided and its intended purpose.

Compliant with legislation

Information release must comply with legislation dealing with privacy, consent, commercial in confidence and access relevant to freedom of information. Legislation includes but is not limited to:

- *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023*
- *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *State Records Act 2000*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003.*

Suitable for release

Irrespective of the type of information to be released under this policy, it may be subject to applicable legislation concerning privacy, consent and confidential information.

Whilst WorkCover WA operates in an open and transparent manner in accordance with the relevant legislation, certain information will be withheld from release including:

- sensitive personal information of a third party, including date of birth, name, address, injury location and payment amounts.
- access to third party information where individual consent has not been provided.
- commercial in confidence information that is considered commercially sensitive.
- the release of information is made in the context of a Public Interest disclosure application; the release of any information must be done in accordance with any disclosure requirements of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003.*

Resource availability

Information held in WorkCover WA systems dates from approximately 1949. It is to be noted that records may already be disposed in accordance with WorkCover WA's approved retention and disposal schedule and therefore only summary information can be provided.

The information sources that WorkCover WA refers to include:

- Agreements – extract of retired database from 1949 to 1998
- hand transcribed card index from 1960 to 1982
- monthly statements by approved insurers from 1974 to 1984
- Scheme Information Management System database from 1975 to current.

Types of Information

Unit Level and Aggregate Data

In Western Australia, approved insurers must submit data to WorkCover WA following WA's National Insurer Data Specification (NIDS). This data helps WorkCover WA:

- monitor and improve the workers' compensation scheme
- promote workplace safety and injury management
- meet national data reporting standards.

WorkCover WA may release aggregate data only when it cannot be used to identify individual workers or employers, and only if the purpose aligns with the objectives of WCIMA23.

The Manager of Data and Analytics is responsible for coordinating and verifying any data releases. Requests for unit level data, however, must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

To protect WorkCover WA's intellectual property and ensure confidentiality, any data release must be governed by a written agreement that confirms WorkCover WA's ownership of the data and clearly outlines how the data can be used.

Individual's Workers Compensation Claim Information

In Western Australia, approved insurers must provide information about claims for compensation to WorkCover WA as per s500(1) of WCIMA23.

WorkCover WA may release information only if the purpose aligns with the objectives of WCIMA23.

Requests for this information received on behalf of an individual will require consent authorisation from the individual to release their personal information. Consent must be provided within a 6-month validity date. Requests will not be processed without an individual's consent.

For an individual seeking access to this information their identification must be verified. WorkCover WA may issue a request for identity verification as appropriate.

WorkCover WA will not provide claims information relating to pre-employment.

WorkCover WA will provide a written response, relevant to the information sought. The response is a true representation of the records held by WorkCover WA.

WorkCover WA's Team Leader, Records and Information Services is responsible for the coordination of the release of information processes for WorkCover WA. This includes delegated authority from the CEO to make decisions regarding the release of information.

Employer Coverage – Potential Liability

In Western Australia, approved insurers provide WorkCover WA with information on policy holders coverage, including updates when changes have occurred. In accordance with section 503(2) of the WCIMA23, the details of an insurer on risk for a particular employer for a specified time can be requested.

Applications to access this information must be made via approved forms as detailed in section 496 of WCIMA23.

WorkCover WA will provide a written response, relevant to the information sought. The response is a true representation of the records held by WorkCover WA.

WorkCover WA's Team Leader, Records and Information Services is responsible for the coordination of the release of information processes for WorkCover WA. This includes delegated authority from the Chief Executive Officer to make decisions regarding the release of information.

Submitting a request

All requests must be lodged via the relevant online forms or sent via email directly to records@workcover.wa.gov.au.

If required, the applicant may be contacted for further information to assist with completing the request.

WorkCover WA will endeavour to provide a response within 30 days from acknowledgement. Where a request requires more time to process, WorkCover WA will inform the applicant and provide a response as soon as practicable.

Information may be provided to external parties at no charge. The application of charges is at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer.

Relevant Legislation, Policies and Other Documents

WorkCover WA will comply with all relevant Acts and legislation as applicable to the coordination of Freedom of Information applications.

Relevant Policies and Procedures

- *Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023*
- *State Records Act 2000*
- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
- *Privacy and Responsible Information Sharing Act 2024*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*
- External data request form

Authority

This policy is issued by the Chief Executive Officer upon endorsement by WorkCover WA's Corporate Executive.

Document Details

Agency contact officer:	General Manager Corporate Services
File reference:	S2024/2365
Date approved (initial policy):	August 2021
Last reviewed (updated policy):	October 2025
Document name:	External Release of Information Policy