

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

The Broadcasting Commission, like all other bodies within the public sector, is required to comply with the Access to Information Act, which gives citizens and other persons a general legal right of access to documents generated or held by public institutions. Under this act, persons may also apply for amendments or annotations to personal records.

If you are interested in applying for access to documents held by the Commission, please take careful note of the following information before you proceed with an application.

-----

The Broadcasting Commission is the regulatory agency for the electronic mass media in Jamaica. Though independent in its authority, it falls under the ambit of the Information Division of the Office of the Prime Minister.

### **Responsibilities**

- implementing broadcasting law and policies
- evaluating licence applications and making recommendations to the Minister of Information on the grant, renewal, terms and conditions of licences
- ensuring that the operations and programming of licensed broadcast and subscriber television services meet legal standards
- conducting research on electronic media in Jamaica
- providing policy advice to the Minister of Information
- investigating complaints concerning the operation of broadcast and subscriber television services

### **Opening hours**

8:30 to 5:00 p.m. (Monday – Thursday)

8:30 to 4:00p.m. (Friday)

## **Business Address and Contact Information**

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Victoria Mutual Building

53 Knutsford Boulevard

Kingston 5

Tel: 929-1998

Fax: 929-1997

Email: [info@broadcom.org](mailto:info@broadcom.org)

Website: [www.broadcom.org](http://www.broadcom.org)

## **Principal Officer**

Executive Director

In fulfilling its mandate under The Broadcasting and Radio Re-diffusion Act and The Television and Sound Broadcasting Regulations, the Commission utilises the following documents in its administrative duties:

- Broadcast licences
- Subscriber television licences (for hardwire and wireless services)
- The Children's Code for Programming
- The Charter for Children and Programming
- Manual for Promoting and Evaluating Applications for Operating Subscriber Television Service in Jamaica
- (STV) Applicant's Track Record Evaluation Form
- Application for the Relicensing of Subscriber Television Licence – Form A
- Application for the Relicensing of Subscriber Television Licence – Form B
- Estimation of a Demand Function for Subscriber Television in Jamaica
- STV Inspection Checklist

*(Included in licence application packages)*

- Guidelines for Applicants for Subscriber Television (STV) Licences;
- Amendment to Application Guidelines (Cable)
- Guidelines for Applicants for Broadcast Licences
- Technical Evaluation Checklist

### **Applying for Access to Broadcasting Commission Documents**

There are four different ways for seeking access to any Broadcasting Commission record. The Commission will respond in writing to all requests for access to records that are received under the **Access to Information Act**.

*Please take careful note of information that is included in this section about time limits for grant of access, as well as costs for reproducing documents.*

1. Complete the application form that is available from the Commission's offices or on-line. If you need assistance completing the form, just ask the Commission officer responsible for handling requests for access.

All applications need to be signed, even on-line forms. If you don't have an electronic signature facility, just alert the Commission officer responsible for handling requests for access and he or she will complete the form on your behalf, in accordance with procedures under the Access to Information Act.

2. Write a letter of request being as specific as possible about the record that you are seeking. You should describe the subject matter of the record(s), give dates if known, and provide all other information that would help the Commission to identify the record being sought. *Please be sure to include an address and a daytime telephone number so that the Commission is able to contact you.*

3. Make a request by telephone. Kindly note that when you contact the organisation, you will be transferred to the Commission officer who is responsible for handling requests for access. The designated officer will fill out an application on your behalf based on information that you will be asked to supply.
  
4. Visit the organisation to request access to the required record. You will be attended to by the Commission officer who is responsible for handling requests for access.

*Time limits for access*

Please note that the Broadcasting Commission will do all it can to respond to requests for information in a timely fashion, usually within forty eight hours (48) hours. However, there may be instances where the Commission may need more time to locate a document or process a request based on case particulars. Under the **Access to Information Act**, the organisation has up to thirty (30) days to provide access to documents that are in its custody. The following table provides more details associated with time limits.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Deadline for communicating with applicant</b>	<b>Extensions</b>
Approved requests	Access within 30 days	30 days	30 days from expiry of first 30 days
Refused requests		30 days	
Transfers	14 days	Within 14 days	
Deferred requests	Dependent on other expiration dates that may be affecting access	14 days	
Internal Review of an appeal	30 days for a decision after receipt of the application	(Internal standard) 5 days from outcome of	
		Internal Review	

### ***Reproduction Costs for Documents***

The following costs have been established in accordance with the law as stated in the **Access to Information (Cost of Reproduction of Official Documents) Regulations, 2003**.

<i>Format</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Photocopy	\$10.00 per page
Transcript	\$10.00 per page
Computer print	\$10.00 per page