



**Information and Privacy
Commissioner/Ontario**

**Commissaire à l'information
et à la protection de la vie privée/Ontario**

ORDER M-404

Appeal M-9400283

Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto



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NATURE OF THE APPEAL:

This is an appeal under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the Act). The appellant has requested copies of records from the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (the Municipality) relating to involuntary terminations of union and management staff in all area offices of the Community Services Department during a specified time frame.

The Municipality provided a fee estimate of \$210, which represents \$180 for three hours of computer processing time and \$30 for one hour of manual search time (in addition to the initial two hours of search time for which no fee is allowable). The Municipality also advised the appellant that photocopying charges would be applied at \$0.20 per page once the number of pages was known. In addition, severances would be made to the records pursuant to section 14(1). The Municipality indicated that the appellant would be apprised of the costs of severing the record at a later date.

The appellant requested a fee waiver for the full amount of the fees. The Municipality agreed to waive any costs relating to severing and photocopying the record. In appealing the Municipality's decision the appellant originally objected to the amount of the fees and the decision to deny a fee waiver of the full amount of the fees.

Following mediation, however, the sole issue remaining is whether the Municipality's decision not to waive the fees in full was proper in the circumstances of this appeal.

A Notice of Inquiry was provided to the Municipality and the appellant. Representations were received from the Municipality. The appellant indicated that he would be relying on comments he made in his letter of appeal.

DISCUSSION:

The appellant indicates that his request for a fee waiver is based on section 45(4)(c) of the Act, which states:

A head shall waive the payment of all or any part of an amount required to be paid under this Act if, in the head's opinion, it is fair and equitable to do so after considering,

whether dissemination of the record will benefit public health or safety;

It has been established in previous orders that the person requesting a fee waiver has the responsibility to provide adequate evidence to support a claim for a fee waiver.

In his letter of appeal, the appellant states that the total number of involuntary terminations, and the reasons for them, are mental health issues of public concern. He states further that the number of involuntary terminations has led to speculation and rumour and has created an atmosphere of paranoia among staff of the Community Services Department.

In Order P-474, Assistant Commissioner Irwin Glasberg identified the following four factors as relevant in

determining whether dissemination of a record will benefit public health or safety under section 57(4)(c) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which is identical to section 45(4)(c) of the Act:

1. Whether the subject matter of the record is a matter of public rather than private interest;
2. Whether the subject matter of the record relates directly to a public health or safety issue;
3. Whether the dissemination of the record would yield a public benefit by a) disclosing a public health or safety concern or b) contributing meaningfully to the development of understanding of an important public health or safety issue;
4. The probability that the requester will disseminate the contents of the record.

Having reviewed the very general comments provided by the appellant, I find that I have not been provided with sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the dissemination of the records at issue will benefit public health or safety. The appellant cannot, therefore, rely on section 45(4)(c) of the Act to support his request for a fee waiver.

ORDER:

I uphold the decision of the Municipality not to waive the fees.

Original signed by: _____
Laurel Cropley
Inquiry Officer

_____ October 17, 1994