

Public Statement of the Children's Life Fund Authority in Compliance with Sections 7, 8 and 9 of the Freedom of Information Act, Chapter 22:02 for the year 2023.

In accordance with Sections 7, 8 and 9 of the Freedom of Information Act Chapter 22:02 (the Act), the Children's Life Fund Authority is required by law to publish the various categories of documents and information available for public scrutiny.

The Act gives the public:

1. A legal right for each person to access information held by the Public Authority;
2. A legal right for each person to have personal information where it is incomplete, incorrect or misleading;
3. A legal right to obtain reasons for adverse decisions made regarding an applicant's request for information under the Act; and
4. A legal right to complain to the Ombudsman and to apply to the High Court for Judicial Review to challenge adverse decisions made under the Act.

Section 7 Statements

Section 7(1) (a)/(i)

Function and Structure of the Authority

VISION STATEMENT OF THE AUTHORITY

For every child, an extraordinary journey into tomorrow; life in its fullness.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE AUTHORITY

To provide funding and support for children with life-threatening medical conditions, while enriching families with hope and strength.

The Authority

The Authority is a body corporate established in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, by operation of the Children's Life Fund Act, and is vested with a function to facilitate the provision of specialist medical treatment to children suffering from life-threatening illnesses for which the required treatment is unavailable at a local medical institution. The functions of the Authority are more specifically set out at section 4(2) of the Act as follows:

(2) The functions of the Authority are to -

- a) operate, manage and administer the Children's Life Fund;
- b) facilitate the provision of specialist medical treatment to children suffering from life-threatening illnesses for which the required treatment is unavailable at a local medical institution;
- c) manage the life unit; and
- d) collect and invest funds.

Composition of the Board of Management

By Sections 5(1) and (2) of the Children's Life Fund Act, the President shall appoint a Board of Management for the purposes of general administration and management of the affairs of the Authority. The Board shall comprise nine members as follows:

- a) a medical practitioner who is a senior public officer nominated by the Minister;
- b) a senior public officer nominated by the Minister with responsibility for finance;
- c) a senior public officer nominated by the Minister with responsibility for Tobago affairs;
- d) a senior public officer nominated by the Tobago House of Assembly
- e) four individuals who are not public officers nominated by the Minister;
- f) the Chief Executive Officer of the Authority, who shall be an ex officio member.

Location:

Children's Life Fund Authority
Building 16, Wendy Fitzwilliam Paediatric Hospital
Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex
Uriah Butler Highway, Champs Fleurs
Trinidad and Tobago

Contact Information

Tel: +1 (868)-225-4673/645-3232 Ext. 3321-7
Website: www.childrenslifefund.org.tt
Email: clfa@health.gov.tt

Organizational Structure of the Children's Life Fund Authority (CLFA)

The Authority is headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who is responsible for the overall management and administration of the CLFA and reports directly to the Board of Management.

The operational structure consists of two main units:

1. Life Unit
 - Responsible for case management, assessment of applications for grants, development of best care plans, and reporting to the CEO.
 - Oversees the clinical and financial assessment of applications, including evaluation of chances of survival without treatment, care plan suitability, prognosis, and financial need.
2. Operations Unit
 - Responsible for finance, administration, procurement, and general operational support to ensure the smooth functioning of the Authority.

The Authority is supported by medical and non-medical volunteers. Volunteers do not hold formal management authority and operate under the supervision of unit staff.

By Section 17(1) of the Children's Life Fund Act, a Life Unit was established to provide the case management services of the Authority in respect of applications for grants for medical treatment under this Act.

By Section 18 of the Children's Life Fund Act, the functions of the Life Unit are to:

- a) receive applications for grants from a parent, legal guardian or medical social worker;
- b) undertake clinical and financial assessment of applications;
- c) develop a best care plan for the beneficiary;
- d) provide logistical support for the beneficiary where feasible; and
- e) report to the Chief Executive Officer on its functions and operations.

By Section 21 of the Children's Life Fund Act, the Life Unit shall undertake the clinical and financial assessment of applications based on:

- a) the chances of survival of the applicant without treatment;
- b) the best care plan;
- c) the expected improvement in the quality of life and overall prognosis; and
- d) assessment of the income and expenditure statement.

Effect of functions on members of the Public

Eligibility

By Section 19 of the Children's Life Fund Act, a person is eligible for a grant where he or she-

- a) is a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago and is ordinarily resident in Trinidad and Tobago;
- b) is unmarried and under the age of eighteen years at the time of the application;
- c) has been referred by a medical specialist in the particular field of treatment required;
- d) requires treatment that is unavailable at a local medical institution;
- e) has been diagnosed with a life-threatening illness; and
- f) has medical expenses that exceed twenty five percent of the income of his or her family.

Application requirements

A person who is eligible may apply to the Life Unit for a grant through his or her parent, legal guardian or a medical social worker. His or her application shall include-

- a) an income and expenditure statement which provides the monthly family income and expenditure;
- b) receipts of all sources of revenue received or pending to address the medical expenses relating to the application;
- c) a medical report from the referring specialist indicating that the treatment is not available locally; and
- d) a statement of medical insurance coverage of the beneficiary where such coverage exists.

Where a beneficiary has received a grant, no further application shall be made on his or her behalf in respect of the same medical condition, for a period of two years from the date of the grant, save in exceptional circumstances.

Grant funding

No grant shall exceed one million dollars (TTD).

Decision-Making Powers Affecting Members of the Public

By Section 9 of the Children's Life Fund Act, the Board shall-

- a) authorize the payment of medical and related expenses of beneficiaries;
- b) ensure that the Children's Life Fund is prudentially managed based on best practices used for investments of a similar nature;
- c) review from time to time, the performance of the Children's Life Fund and make appropriate recommendations;
- d) establish procedures for applying to the Children's Life Fund, determining the eligibility for the payment of reimbursement of medical expenses for beneficiaries and processing claim disputes;
- e) set and administer rules for qualification of beneficiaries in accordance with prescribed policies established by the government;
- f) review and where appropriate, approve applications processed by the Life Unit;
- g) make payments from the Children's Life Fund on behalf of the beneficiaries;
- h) disseminate information on the Children's Life Fund and the programme to the public;
- i) authorize the annual operating expenses including the administrative costs of the Authority, with the approval of the Minister;

- j) establish and develop strategic partnerships with local and foreign institutions to facilitate the execution of best care plans for beneficiaries; and
- k) perform such other duties as may be necessary to achieve the purposes of the Authority.

Section 7 (1) (a) (ii)

Categories of documents in the Possession of the Children's Life Fund Authority (CLFA):

- a) Personnel files, which detail all staff appointments, job applications, job specifications, promotions, transfers, resignations, leave, vacation, etc
- b) Files dealing with the accounting and financial management function of the Authority
- c) Financial records (cheques, vouchers, receipts, expenses, and other financial documents)
- d) Files dealing with Cabinet documents
- e) Annual Reports
- f) Files dealing with matters relating to the procurement of supplies, services, and equipment.
- g) Charts, photographs, compact discs, and catalogues
- h) Policy and procedure documents
- i) Internal and external correspondence files
- j) Documents relating to the strategic and operational plans of the Authority
- k) Legislation and legal instruments
- l) Legal opinions and related matters
- m) Files dealing with the training of staff
- n) Minutes and agenda of board meetings
- o) File dealing with circulars, memoranda, notices, bulletins
- p) Newspaper clippings, publications, and advertisements
- q) Reports
- r) Books, booklets, leaflets, pamphlets, brochures, posters, and directories
- s) Files on official conferences and events hosted and attended by the Authority
- t) Inventories

u) Forms

v) Certificates

w) Financial Statements - Children's Life Fund and Children's Life Fund Authority (prepared in 2023)

x) Administrative case files relating to beneficiary applications and assistance provided under the Children's Life Fund Act, including supporting documentation, assessments, decisions, and logistical arrangements, subject to applicable exemptions under the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 7 (1) (a) (iii)

Materials prepared for publication or inspection by members of the public and the places at which persons may inspect or obtain the material:

- Application forms
- Checklist
- Enquiry forms

These materials are available for inspection or copies between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on normal working days at:

The office of the Children's Life Fund Authority, located at Building 16, Wendy Fitzwilliam Paediatric Hospital, Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, Uriah Butler Highway, Champs Fleurs.

Section 7 (1) (a) (iv)

A statement listing the literature available by way of subscription services

The Authority does not have any documents or literature available by subscription.

Section 7 (1) (a) (v)

Procedure to be followed when accessing a document from the Children's Life Fund

Authority

General Procedure

In order to have the rights given to you by the Act (for example, the right to challenge a decision if your request for information is refused), you must make your request in writing. The applicant must, therefore, complete the appropriate form (Request for Access to Official Documents) available at the Office of the Children's Life Fund Authority, which is located at Building 16, Wendy Fitzwilliam Paediatric Hospital, Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex, Uriah Butler Highway, Champs Fleurs, for information that is not readily available in the public domain.



Addressing Requests

To facilitate prompt handling, please address all requests to the Chief Executive Officer, CLFA.

Details in the Request

Applicants should provide details that shall allow for ready identification and retrieval of the records being requested. If insufficient information is provided, clarification shall be sought from the applicant. If you are not sure how to write your request or what details to include, communicate with our designated officer.

Requests not handled under the FOIA

A request under the FOIA shall not be processed to the extent that it requests the provision of information already available to the public. This may include, but not limited to, the posting on the CLFA's website, another public authority or from brochures, pamphlets and other forms of media.

Responding to your requests:

Retrieving Documents

The Authority is required to furnish copies of documents only when they are in our possession or easily retrievable from storage.

Furnishing Documents

The Children's Life Authority is required to:

- i. Furnish copies of information in its possession, custody or power.
- ii. Furnish only one copy of a document.
- iii. Furnish the best copy possible and note its quality in replying.

The Children's Life Fund Authority is not required to:

- i. Create new documents. For example, write a new program so that a computer will print information in the preferred format for the applicant.
- ii. Perform research for the applicant.
- iii. Reconstruct any illegible copy of a document for the applicant.

Time Limits

General – The Act sets a time limit of no later than thirty (30) calendar days for a decision to be taken as to whether to disclose the documents requested. In failing to meet the deadline, the Act gives the applicant the right to proceed as if the request has been denied. The Children's Life Fund Authority will diligently try to comply with the time limits but if it appears that processing the request may take longer than the statutory limit, an acknowledgement of the request and a status report will be provided. Since there is a possibility that the request may



have been incorrectly sent or misdirected, the applicant should call or write to confirm the receipt of the request and to ascertain its status.

Time Allowed – The Children's Life Fund Authority will, as far as reasonably protocols determine whether to accede to the request for access of information, as soon as practicable but no later than thirty (30) days from the date the request was received. If it is determined that the applicant is entitled to the information requested, then provision will be made for the inspection of the document requested.

Prior to the commencement of the Act, old records may have been destroyed. The granting of a request for such documents may, therefore, be impossible. Various laws, regulations and manuals give the time periods for keeping records before they may be destroyed, for example the Exchequer and Audit Act, Chapter 69:01.

Section 7 (1) (a) (vi)

Statement specifying the officer responsible for processing of requests for access to documents

Officers in the Public Authority Responsible for:

1. The initial receipt of and action upon notices under Section 10 of the Act;
2. Requests for access to documents under Section 13 of the Act: and
3. Applications for corrections of Personal Information under Section 36 of the Act.

To facilitate prompt handling of your request, please address it to the:

Office of the Chief Executive Officer

Children's Life Fund Authority

Wendy Fitzwilliam Paediatric Hospital

Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex

Uriah Butler Highway

Champs Fleurs

Telephone: 1(868) 225-4673 ext. 3321-24

Section 7 (1) (a) (vii)

Advisory Boards, Councils, Committees, and other bodies (Meetings/Minutes are open to the public)

At the present time, there are no bodies that fall within the meaning of this section of the FOIA.



Section 7(1)(a)(viii)

At this time, there is no library or reading room facility at the Authority.

SECTION 8 STATEMENTS

Section 8 (1) (a) (i)

Documents containing interpretations or particulars of written laws or schemes administered by the Authority, not being particulars contained in another written law:

- The Children's Life Fund Act, Chapter 29:01, Act 12 of 2010.

Section 8 (1) (a) (ii)

Manuals, rules of procedure, statements of policy, records of decisions, letters of advice to persons outside the public authority, or similar documents containing rules, policies, guidelines, practices or precedents:

- Children's Life Fund Authority Employee Handbook
- Children's Life Fund Authority Standard Operating Procedures
- Guidelines for Approval of Medical Institutions/Hospitals

Section 8 (1) (b)

In enforcing writing laws or schemes administered by the public authority where a member of the public might be directly affected by that enforcement, being documents containing information on the procedures to be employed or the objectives to be pursued in the enforcement of the written laws or schemes:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

SECTION 9 REPORTS & STATEMENTS

Section 9 (1) (a)

A report or a statement containing the advice or recommendations of a body or entity established within the public authority:

- Case Reports (Access is restricted under FOIA due to the personal, medical, and confidential information contained therein.)

Section 9 (1) (b)

A report, or a statement containing advice or recommendations, of a body or entity established outside the public authority by or under a written law, or by a Minister of Government or other public authority for the purpose of submitting a report or reports, providing advice or making recommendations to the public authority or to the responsible Minister of that public authority:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (c)

A report, or a statement containing the advice or recommendations, of an Interdepartmental Committee whose membership includes an officer of the Authority:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (d)

A report, or a statement containing the advice or recommendations of a committee established within the public authority to submit a report, provide advice or make recommendations to the responsible Minister of that public authority or to another officer of the public authority who is not a member of the committee:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (e)

A report (including a report concerning the results of studies, surveys or tests) prepared for the public authority by a scientific or technical expert, whether employed within the public authority or not, including a report expressing the opinion of such an expert on scientific or technical matters:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (f)

A report prepared for the public authority by a consultant who was paid for preparing the report:

- Review of selected cash transactions
- Financial Statements– Children's Life Fund Authority & Children's Life Fund 2014-2017
- Financial Statements – Children's Life Fund Authority 2018 & 2019
- Evaluation of Internal Financial Controls
- Financial Statements – Children's Life Fund 2018-2022
- Financial Statements– Children's Life Fund Authority 2020-2022
- Financial Statements– Children's Life Fund Authority & Children's Life Fund 2023

Section 9 (1) (g)

A report prepared within the public authority and containing the results of studies, surveys or tests carried out for the purpose of assessing, or making recommendations on, the feasibility of establishing a new or proposed Government policy, programme or project:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (h)

A report on the performance or efficiency on the public authority, or of an office, division or branch of the public authority, whether the report is of a general nature or concerns a particular policy, programme or project administered by the public authority:

- Social Sector Initiative Performance (SSIP) Report
- Children's Life Fund Authority Quarterly Report for the Ministry of Health.

Section 9 (1) (i)

A report containing (1) final plans or proposals for the re-organization of the functions of the public authority, (2) the establishment of a new policy, programme or project to be administered by the public authority, or (3) the alteration of an existing policy programme or project administered by the public authority, whether or not the plans or proposals are subject to approval by an officer of the public authority, another public authority or Cabinet:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (j)

A statement prepared within the public authority and containing policy directions for the drafting of legislation:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (k)

A report of a test carried out within the public authority on a product for the purpose of purchasing equipment:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.



Section 9 (1) (l)

An environmental impact statement prepared within the public authority:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

Section 9 (1) (m)

A valuation report prepared for the public authority by a valuator, whether or not the valuator is an office of the public authority:

At this time, no documents that fall within the meaning of this section of this Act are lodged at the Children's Life Fund Authority.

The categories of documents listed herein reflect the types of records maintained by the Children's Life Fund Authority in the course of its statutory functions. Access to specific documents is subject to the exemptions and provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, Chap. 22:02.