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To: ALL MEDIA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **ICO release public awareness video on the role of the Information Commissioner and ICO**

Hamilton, Bermuda. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has released a new public awareness video highlighting the roles of Information Commissioner and the ICO in upholding the rights of Bermudians and residents when making request for public records under the Public Access to Information (PATI) Act.

"When Bermudians and residents make a PATI request for public records, they may receive the information they need, or may accept a public authority's reasons for refusing access to the records. However, in some situations a PATI requester may disagree with a public authority's decision on their PATI request and question what they should do next?" explained Information Commissioner Gitanjali Gutierrez. "The aim of the ICO's new video is to help explain the roles of both the Information Commissioner and ICO when this question arises. Bermudians and residents' rights under the PATI Act are 'rights' because they are legally enforceable and, when the need arises, will be enforced by the Information Commissioner – at no cost to PATI requesters. Anyone who makes a PATI request can turn to the Information Commissioner for an independent assessment of whether public authorities have upheld their PATI rights. You have the right to ask the Information Commissioner whether you should have access to the public records that you seek."

The purpose of the PATI Act is to ensure that the public has access to public records to the fullest extent possible, within the provisions of the PATI Act. The Information Commissioner and the officers of the ICO work diligently to uphold PATI rights and reinforce public authorities' compliance with the PATI Act, which ultimately increases the transparency and accountability of Bermuda's public authorities in concrete ways.

If you are a Bermudian or resident and are interested in learning more about how to make a PATI request for public records, contact the ICO on 543-3700, via email at [info@ico.bm](mailto:info@ico.bm) or visit our website at [ico.bm](http://ico.bm).

The video is available on the ICO's website at [ico.bm](http://ico.bm), [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#).

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Editor's Notes:

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is an independent public office responsible for promoting the use of and overseeing compliance with the Public Access to Information (PATI) Act 2010. The PATI Act gives the public a right to access records held by public authorities, subject to listed exemptions and administrative grounds for denial of access. Individuals who are dissatisfied with the response of a public authority may seek an independent review by the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner shall investigate, and the decisions by the Information Commissioner are legally binding.

Further information about the ICO is available at [www.ico.bm](http://www.ico.bm).