

# Public Records Policy

Being provided access to records is not only a right of the public to make certain government's are accountable for their actions and decisions, but is a privilege to public servants by ensuring open government and that democratic rights are being secured.

Records are created or received by the office and document the agency's organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities regardless of the medium it is placed on (ORC 149.011). All records are open to the public unless they do not meet the definition of a record or are exempt from disclosure by law.

## How do I request records?

When you request record(s) for purview, you must clearly state what existing records are being requested. This is done to allow for the office to fulfill the request correctly and promptly. If the request is vague, the office will ask for more clarification on what is being requested.

When requesting records, you are not obligated to:

- Reveal your identity
- State the reason behind your request
- Provide the request in writing  
(However voluntarily complying with this step will ensure a fast and accurate response.)

*Note: The office has the right to ask for this information, but must state the information is not mandatory to fulfill the request and that the requestor is not obligated to provide such information. ORC 149.43(B)(5)*

## How long will it take for the office to fulfill my request?

Records are retrieved within a reasonable amount of time in accordance with the volume of records being requested, the physical location of those records to the main office, the amount of time required for legal review for possible disclosure or redactions, and the time needed to prepare them for delivery.

For voluminous requests requiring additional time to fulfill, an acknowledgement letter will be sent to you specifying the estimated timeframe in which the request will be completed, estimated payment costs, and exemptions and disclosures of the records, if applicable.

If you would like to inspect records on-site, the office will collect the records for inspection to view during public business hours under the supervision of the office's records keeper to ensure the requestor receives satisfactory customer service.

## What happens if my request cannot be fulfilled?

While the office will strive to fulfill your request, overly broad requests, where the office cannot identify the records being requested or the requester does not clearly specify the records being requested, cannot be completed. However, the office will contact the requester if his or her contact information is available to explain how the records are arranged to allow for the request to be altered, thus providing the office with information to fulfill the request.

Also, the office is not responsible for creating a new record or performing extensive research to fulfill requests. In these cases, you are encouraged to visit the office in person to review existing records to collect desired information.

## What are redacted and closed records?

Some records contain information on them, which are exempt from disclosure, but the remainder of the record is public. In these circumstances, the office will provide the requested records with the disclosed information removed. A letter will be provided to you stating what redactions were made and the citation of law allowing the redaction(s).

If the records being requested are exempt from public view, a letter will be sent to you stating the law citation for the disclosure.

## Do I have to pay the office for my request?

You will be charged for the actual costs of copies and, if requested, the costs of mailing the records to you, but you will not be charged for employee labor used to compile your request. Payment for the request must be provided to the office before the records are received.

Records can be provided to you on paper or on the media in which the records were created. The office is not obligated to supply records on a media which the records do not exist on; however, the office may provide this service if it is deemed practical.

## Records Management

For a full version of the LCBDD Public Records Policy, or to request a copy of the Records Retention Schedule, contact the Administration offices at 740-349-6588.