

City of Cleveland Public Records Policy

It is the policy of the City of Cleveland to adhere to the state's Public Records Act.

Public Records

This office, in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, defines records to include the following: any document – paper, electronic (including, but not limited to, email) or other format – that is created or received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of a public office that documents the organization, function, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office. All records of the City of Cleveland are public unless they are exempt from disclosure under the ORC.

All exemptions are to be construed in favor of disclosure as required by law and any denial of public records in response to a valid request must be accompanied by an explanation, including legal authority, as outlined in the ORC. If the request is in writing, the explanation must also be in writing. If only a portion of a record is exempt, then only that portion may be withheld or redacted. Redactions must also be accompanied by an explanation.

It is the policy of the City of Cleveland that, as required by Ohio law, records will be organized and maintained so that they are available for inspection and copying in accordance with the law. The City of Cleveland record retention schedule is available in the City of Cleveland's Law Library, located in the Public Administration Branch of the Cleveland Public Library on the first floor of City Hall (an outline of the retention schedule is available online at www.city.cleveland.oh.us.)

Record Requests

Requests for public records must clearly state the records and/or information being sought to allow the City of Cleveland to identify, retrieve and review the records. If a request is vague and overbroad, the City may deny the request, but must inform the requestor about the manner in which records are kept and how the City accesses the records so that the requestor can revise the request.

For management and efficiency, the City has a public record request form available. The requestor does not have to put a request in writing and does not have to provide his or her identity or the intended use of the requested public record. The City does not limit or condition the availability of public records based on whether a written form is used or whether a request identifies him or herself. However, the records custodian may ask for a written request and may ask for the requestor's identity and/or intended use of the information requested if (1) it would benefit the requestor by helping the public office identify, locate or deliver the records being sought and (2) the requestor is informed that a written request and the requestor's identify and intended use of the information are not required.

Public records are generally available for inspection during the normal operating hours of the department, division, or office location. Public records must be made available for inspection promptly and copies of public records must be made available within a reasonable period of time. "Prompt" and "reasonable" take into account the volume of records requested, the proximity of the location where the records are stored; and the necessity for any legal review of the records requested.

Each request should be evaluated for an estimated length of time required to gather the records. Most routine requests for records should be satisfied immediately if feasible to do so. Routine requests include, but are not limited to, meeting minutes, salary information, personnel rosters, police incident reports, building and violation notices and permits. If a limited number or copies are requested, or if the records are readily available in an electronic format that may be emailed or downloaded easily, these should be made as quickly as possible.

The City may charge for the actual cost of making copies of records. The City's current costs are as follows:

5 cents per page of paper copy	\$2.50 per video tape
\$1.00 per diskette	\$1.00 per 5x7 photograph
\$2.50 per compact disc	\$2.00 per 8x10 photograph
\$2.00 per audio tape	If an outside duplication service is requested, all charges from the service are passed on to the requestor

9/28/07