



Pickerington Public Library

Public Records Policy

Board Policy

Date Approved: 11/18/19
Effective Date: 11/18/19
Replacing Policy Effective: 6/8/09

It is the policy of the Pickerington Public Library to adhere to the Public Records Act of the State of Ohio. All records of the Library that meet the definition of “public records” are public unless they are exempt from disclosure under Ohio and Federal law, such as under the exemption in ORC 149.43 that prohibits the Library from releasing any library records or from disclosing any customer information except in situations specified in that statute.

All library employees, officers and authorized representatives are “Public Officials” under ORC 149.011 and are responsible for maintaining the public records according to this policy and the approved Schedules of Records Retention and Disposition (RC-2) that identify these records. In accordance with the Ohio Public Records Act records will be organized and maintained so that they are readily available for inspection and copying. The Fiscal Officer and Director of the library are the Records Officers for the Pickerington Public Library and shall act as the coordinator of records maintenance and shall respond to public records requests made of the Pickerington Public Library.

Administrative Procedure:

Date Approved: 11/18/19
Effective Date: 11/18/19
Replacing Administrative Procedure: new

I. Public Records

- a. Are any item
 - a. That is stored on a fixed medium (i.e. paper, computer, e-mail).
 - b. Is created, received, or sent by a public office.
 - c. That documents the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the library.
- b. Shall be organized and maintained in a manner that serves both the administrative needs of the office, as well as the public’s interest in the availability of those records for inspection and copying.

II. Records Requests

- a. Although the Public Records Act does not require that specific language is required to make a public records request, the requester must identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the public office to identify, retrieve and review those records.
- b. If a request is received by the library and it is not clear what records are being sought, the Records Officer will contact the requester for clarification, and assist the requester in revising the request by informing the requester of the manner in which the office maintains its records.
- c. Requesters are encouraged to make any and all public records requests in written form. While the requester does not have to put a records request in writing, a written request enables the library to identify responsive records with greater speed and accuracy.

- d. A requester does not have to provide their identity or the intended use of the requested public records. It is the library's general policy that this information is not to be requested. In some cases, such information could enhance the ability of the library to identify, locate, and/or deliver responsive public records in response to the request.
- e. While the library respects the right of requesters to withhold their identity, the library does require that requesters provide a means for the library to communicate with them about their requests and to ultimately identify the location where responsive public records are to be forwarded.
- f. Any "Public Official" of the library is able to receive a public records request, but must be promptly forwarded to the Records Officer within one (1) working day of receipt of the request.
- g. The Records Officer will acknowledge the request and provide requester with an estimated date of response and estimate of costs. If at any time prior to completing our response, we believe our response will take longer than initially estimated (because of the volume of records requested, the proximity of location where the records are stored, or the complexity of the legal review), the Records Officer will inform the requester of this change.
- h. Responses to public records requests will be completed in a reasonable time taking into account the scope of the request, the ease or difficulty of identifying, compiling and reviewing potentially responsive records and the operational needs of the library.
- i. If any portion of the public records must be denied because the records are exempt from disclosure under the law, the Records Officer will inform the requester which records have been requested are not public by clearly marking the portion "redacted" or will explain which portions of the records have been redacted. In addition, we will provide the legal authority upon which we have relied.

III. Availability of Records

- a. Public Records are to be promptly available for inspection during regular business hours, which are Monday through Friday 9 am to 5 pm, except Holidays.
- b. Copies of records will be provided within a reasonable period of time.
- c. "Prompt" and "reasonable" take into account the volume of records requested; proximity of the location where the records are stored; and the necessity of any legal review of the records requested.

IV. Costs for Public Records

- a. Those seeking public records will be charged only the actual cost.
- b. The charge for paper copies is 10 cents (\$.10) per 8 ½ by 11 page. Two-sided photocopies shall be charged at the rate of 20 cents (\$.20) per page. Documents which require copies larger than 8 ½ by 11 may require the payment of an additional fee which shall reflect the actual costs of copying.
- c. The charge for downloaded computer files to a library provided USB is based on the actual replacement cost of the USB. The library will not download to a requester's USB for library equipment safety.
- d. There is no charge for documents e-mailed, except where third-party software and/or services are required to e-mail large electronic files.
- e. Requesters may ask that documents be mailed to them. They may be charged the actual cost of the postage and mailing supplies.
- f. Advance payment may be required for all actual costs which are anticipated to exceed ten dollars (\$10.00).
- g. The library may choose to waive any and all costs associated with compliance with a public records request. Any waiver of costs should not be construed to waive, and does not in fact waive any right to the assertion of the library to request and collect actual costs of compliance with a later public records request.