

Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)  
Frequently Asked Questions  
Freedom of Information Act, 1976 PA 442

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 1976 PA 442, can be found at the following link: <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-act-442-of-1976>

Contact Information:

Website: [www.michigan.gov/larafoia](http://www.michigan.gov/larafoia)  
Email: [LARAFOIAInfo@michigan.gov](mailto:LARAFOIAInfo@michigan.gov)  
Mail: State of Michigan  
Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs  
c/o FOIA Office  
Ottawa Bldg., 4th Floor  
P.O. Box 30004  
Lansing, MI 48909  
Phone: 517-335-3327  
Fax: 517-335-4037

**Question:**

Who can Request a Public Record?

**Answer:**

All persons who are not jailed in a state or local correctional facility may make a FOIA request.

**Question:**

I want to request records from LARA, can I call the LARA FOIA Office?

**Answer:**

FOIA requests must be in writing. You can submit the request by email, fax or mail or through this records portal.

**Question:**

If I send a FOIA request to a specific LARA agency/bureau/commission, what will happen to it?

**Answer:**

If a FOIA request is received by an agency/bureau/commission, it will be immediately forwarded to the LARA FOIA Office at [LARAFOIAInfo@michigan.gov](mailto:LARAFOIAInfo@michigan.gov). If the request is received via fax or mail, the request will be scanned and forwarded to the email provided above. The LARA FOIA Office will then process your request.

**Question:**

How can I make sure I provide enough information in my request?

**Answer:**

Provide as many specific details as possible – indicate the type of license you are requesting records for and which LARA agency your request is intended for. Also, be sure to describe, in detail, the type of records you are requesting. If you have specific information, like case numbers, incident dates, license numbers, or the like, those should be supplied in your request. Finally, be sure to include your contact information in case the LARA FOIA Office needs clarification or additional information.

Examples:

- “I am requesting disciplinary records for Dr. John Doe, license number xxxxxxxxx.”
- “I am requesting a copy of the MIOSHA investigation report for the January 1, 1996 incident at ABC Company involving John Doe.”

**Question:**

Are there certain records that will not be given out under FOIA?

**Answer:**

FOIA contains a number of exemptions to the release of public records. There are numerous other statutes that provide exemptions for the release of records (for example, certain types of health information are exempt from FOIA under Federal law). If records requested are exempt or partially exempt, this will be stated in the response from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

**Question:**

What is a fee charge? Are fees charged for processing requests for public records through FOIA?

**Answer:**

The law permits LARA to charge a fee to process FOIA requests based upon certain factors. We use a form to give you a detailed itemization of the costs allowed under the law. The Department may charge for the following costs:

1. the costs of labor for the search, location, and examination of public records;
2. the costs of labor for the review of public records and separation and deletion of exempt from nonexempt material;
3. the cost of nonpaper physical media;
4. the cost of duplication and publication of public records;
5. the costs of labor for the duplication or publication of public records;
6. the actual cost of mailing public records;
7. the cost related to onsite inspection of public records;
8. the cost of CDs, DVDs, flash drives, photographs, etc.

**Question:**

Can I obtain Court Records through FOIA?

**Answer:**

The Judiciary, including the District, Circuit Court and Probate Courts and the office of the County Clerk when acting in the capacity of Clerk for the Circuit Court, are not considered

public bodies and therefore are not subject to FOIA. See MCL 15.232(d)(v). The Courts will review a request directed to them to determine if they are able to provide a response.

**Question:**

How will I receive my records?

**Answer:**

If your request was received by the LARA FOIA Office through this portal, a notice will be emailed to you and your records will be sent to your My Request Center. Responses are typically sent in the same manner they are received; however, if an email address is provided, LARA may respond electronically.

**Question:**

When will I receive documents I have requested under FOIA?

**Answer:**

The FOIA requires an initial response to your request, or a notice of an extension, within 5 business days. If an extension is taken, LARA has 10 additional business days to provide a response. Depending upon the nature of your request, you may receive copies of existing nonexempt public records with this initial response. If the request involves a complicated search for numerous records, you may receive an invoice with an estimated fee charge for the cost to process your request.

**Question:**

How can I pay my invoice?

**Answer:**

If you submitted your request through this portal, at the top of the invoice, select Pay Now.

If you received a response by email, mail, or fax you can pay online by visiting LARA's website at the following link: <https://www.thepayplace.com/mi/deleg/larafoia>.

Check or money order (via mail): send the check or money order, made payable to the State of Michigan to P.O. Box 30004, Lansing, MI 48909.

If you are mailing a check or money order, you will need to provide the FOIA request number on the check or money order to ensure proper credit.

**Question:**

If I want to read the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), where can I find it?

**Answer:**

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 1976 PA 442, can be found at the following link: <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-act-442-of-1976>