

Michigan Department of State Police Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Procedures and Guidelines

Effective Date: January 7, 2020

Supersedes: Vi (07/01/2015), V2 (July 13, 2018), V3(May 1, 2019)

A. Appointment of FOIA Coordinator.

In accordance with Section 6 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), MCL 15.236, the department has appointed a FOIA coordinator, as well as assistant FOIA coordinators. The names of the FOIA coordinator and assistant FOIA coordinators are available from the Director's Office.

B. Submission of FOIA Request.

FOIA requests to the Michigan State Police can be submitted online, or by email, fax, or mail.

Online: [Public Records Request Portal](#)
Email: MSPRecords@michigan.gov
Fax: 517-241-1935
Mail: Michigan State Police
Attn: Records Resource Section
P.O. Box 30634
Lansing, MI 48909

A FOIA request must include the following information:

- Individual (other than one who claims indigency)
 - Complete name
 - Address – Must be written in compliance with the United States Postal Service addressing standards.
 - Contact information – must include a valid telephone number or electronic email address.
- Person (other than an individual):
 - Complete name of person's agent
 - Address of person's agent – must be written in compliance with United States Postal Service addressing standards
 - Contact information of person's agent – must include a valid telephone number or electronic mail address.

C. Immediately Forward FOIA Request.

Any employee of the department who receives a written request for a public record must immediately forward that request to the Records Resource Section (RRS) at MSPRecords@michigan.gov. If a department employee receives an electronic written request for a public record that is delivered to a spam or junk-mail folder, the employee must record the date and time the written request was delivered to the spam or junk-mail folder, and date and time the employee first became aware of the written request. The employee must forward those dates and times to the RRS with the written request.

D. Request Response Time.

The department may extend the time for responding by an additional ten business days by notifying the requesting person in writing of the reason for the extension and the new due date (MCL 15.235(2)(d) and (6)). Due to the short statutory time period within which the department must issue a written notice in response to the FOIA request, it is imperative that there be no delay in complying with the departmental procedures and guidelines.

E. Response to a FOIA Request

Only the department's FOIA coordinator or assistant FOIA coordinators will respond to FOIA requests. The department will provide copies of these procedures and guidelines, and a summary of these procedures and guidelines with each written response or provide a link to an online version of these documents. If a request is denied, in full or in part, the department will provide the requester an explanation of the basis of the denial under the FOIA and give notice to the requester of his or her remedial rights (MCL 15.235(4)).

F. Notification of FOIA Request

Upon receipt of a FOIA request, a member of the department's RRS will contact the work site(s) that might possess records responsive to the FOIA request. The contact will include a date the documents are due to the RRS.

G. Work Site Response to the Department's Records Resource Section

The work site's response is due to the RSS as soon as possible, but not later than the date provided by the RRS. If no documents responsive to the request exist, the work site must notify the RRS that no records will be sent.

H. Assessment of Fees for a FOIA Request

The FOIA permits the department to charge a fee for the search, retrieval, examination, review, and separation and deletion of exempt from non-exempt material, but only if the failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs to the department because of the nature of the request in the particular instance, and the department identifies these unreasonably high costs (MCL 15.243(1) and (3)).

The following fee guidelines for calculating labor and material costs incurred in processing FOIA requests are established pursuant to MCL 15.234(3):

1. Fees will be uniform and not dependent upon the identity of the requesting person.
2. Fees will be itemized using the attached detailed itemization form and will include:
 - a. Labor costs for the search, location, and examination of public records which will be calculated using the hourly wage of the department's lowest paid employee capable of conducting the search, location, and examination, whether or not they are available or perform the labor. Such labor costs shall be estimated and charged in increments of 15 minutes with all partial increments rounded down. The hourly wage will be based on the department's payroll records for the applicable fiscal year. Labor costs shall also include up to 50% of the hourly wage to partially cover the cost of fringe benefits, not to exceed the actual cost of fringe benefits.
 - b. Labor costs for the review of public records and separation and deletion of exempt from nonexempt material which will be calculated using the hourly wage of the department's lowest paid employee capable of conducting the review and separation and deletion of exempt from nonexempt material, whether or not they are available or actually perform the labor. Such labor costs shall be estimated and charged in increments of 15 minutes with all partial increments rounded down. The hourly wage will be based on the department's payroll records for the applicable fiscal year. Labor costs shall also include up to 50% of the hourly wage to partially cover the cost of fringe benefits, not to exceed the actual cost of fringe benefits.
 - c. Non-paper physical media costs will be calculated using the actual and most reasonably economical cost of computer discs, computer tapes, and other digital and similar media provided by the department.
 - d. Duplication and publication costs for paper copies will be calculated using the actual total incremental cost of necessary duplication or publication of a public record, not including labor. The actual and incremental cost, calculated per sheet, shall be charged and will not exceed 10 cents per sheet of paper for letter or legal-size paper. The department shall use the most economical means available for making copies, including the use of double-sided printing, if cost-saving and available.

- e. Labor costs for the duplication or publication of public records, including making paper copies, making digital copies, or transferring digital public records to be produced on non-paper physical media or through electronic means, will be calculated using the hourly wage of the department's lowest paid employee capable of duplicating or publishing the public records, whether or not they are available or actually perform the labor. Such labor costs shall be estimated and charged in increments of one minute with all partial increments rounded down. The hourly wage will be based on the department's payroll records for the applicable fiscal year. Labor costs shall also include up to 50% of the hourly wage to partially cover the cost of fringe benefits, not to exceed the actual cost of fringe benefits.
 - f. Actual costs of mailing using a reasonably economical and justifiable manner.
3. No department employee shall stipulate to work overtime or include overtime wages in the labor costs described in these procedures and guidelines.
 4. If a requester submits an affidavit of indigence, the first \$20.00 of a fee will be waived. A requesting person must include a statement that the request is not being made in conjunction with outside parties in exchange for payment or other remuneration. Other than \$20.00 for cases of indigence, no department employee shall waive a fee or any part of a fee without authorization from the FOIA coordinator.
 5. Labor costs for monitoring an inspection of original records will be calculated using the hourly wage of the department's lowest paid employee capable of monitoring the inspection. The hourly wage will be based on the department's payroll records for the applicable fiscal year. Note: Section 3(3) of the FOIA, MCL 15.233(3), provides, in pertinent part, that "[a] public body shall protect public records from loss, unauthorized alteration, mutilation, or destruction."
 6. If a statute authorizes the sale or production of public records to the public for a specified fee or if a fee for production of public records is otherwise set by statute, the department will charge the statutory fee in lieu of a fee calculated using the guidelines set forth above.

I. Deposit Requirements

If the department estimates a fee to process a FOIA request greater than \$50.00, the department will require a good-faith deposit from the requestor before processing the request. The deposit shall not exceed half of the total estimated fee. Any written notice containing a request for a deposit shall also contain a best effort estimate by the department regarding the time frame, after a deposit is received, that it will take the department to provide the public records to the requestor. The time frame estimate is not binding upon the department, but the department shall provide the estimate in good faith and strive to be reasonably accurate and to provide the public records in a manner based on this State's public policy under Section 1 of the FOIA, MCL 15.231, and the nature of the request in the particular instance.

If a good faith deposit is required, the department must receive the required deposit within 45 days after the statutorily determined receipt of the good faith estimate notice, otherwise the FOIA request is considered abandoned and the department will not be required to fulfill the request.

J. Appeals of Fees and Disclosure Determinations

If the department charges a fee or denies all or part of a request, the requestor may submit to the head of the department a written appeal that specifically states the word "appeal" and identifies the basis for which the fee should be reduced, or the disclosure determination should be reversed.

K. Transparency Liaison

The transparency liaison is available to assist members of the public in navigating the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act and other laws applicable to public records. In addition, the transparency liaison can provide information on participation in public meetings and compliance with the Open Meetings Act. The Transparency Liaison can be contacted at MSP-Transparency@michigan.gov.