

PUBLIC RECORDS PROCEDURES

Public Records Officer

Skamania County Prosecutor
240 NW Vancouver Avenue
PO Box 790
Stevenson, WA 98648
509-427-3790

Public Records Officer Designees

Each Elected Official, Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, Department Heads/Program Managers in departments under the Board of County Commissioners, Superior Court Administrator, District Court Administrator, and Clerks of the Boundary Review Board, Board of Equalization, Civil Service Board, and Disability Board.

Public Records Information and Form

Public Records Procedures and a Request For Public Records Form are available for use by requestors at the office of the public records officer or designee, each County department, and on the County's website at www.skamaniacounty.org. A variety of records are also available at the County's website.

Availability of Public Records

Public records are available for inspection in all County departments between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. There is no obligation to allow inspection immediately upon a demand. A person seeking to inspect public records may be requested to schedule an appointment for inspection.

No member of the public may remove a document from a County department or office viewing area or disassemble or alter any document. Original public records shall not be released to the public for any purpose.

Request for Public Records

Any person wishing to inspect or copy public records of Skamania County should make the request in writing on the County's request form or by letter, fax, or e-mail addressed to the public records officer or designee and shall include the following information:

- Name of requestor;
- Address of requestor;
- Other contact information, including telephone number and any e-mail address;
- Identification of the public records adequate for the public records officer or designee to locate the records; and
- The date and time of day of the request.

If the request is for a list of individuals, the requester will be required to sign under penalty of perjury that such information will not be used for commercial purposes.

A requestor must request an identifiable record or class of records that is in existence at the time of the request and that staff can reasonably locate. The County is not required to create a public record in response to a request. A request for information in general is not considered a request for an identifiable record. If the requestor wishes to have copies of the records made instead of inspecting them, he or she should so indicate and make arrangements to pay for copies of the records.

Within five (5) business days of receipt of the request, the public records officer or designee will do one or more of the following:

- Make the records available for inspection or copying;
- If copies are requested and payment of a deposit for the copies, if any, is made or terms of payment are agreed upon, send the copies to the requestor;
- Provide a reasonable estimate of when records will be available; or
- If the request is unclear or does not sufficiently identify the requested records, request clarification from the requestor. Such clarification may be requested and provided by telephone or e-mail. The public records officer or designee may revise the estimate of when records will be available; or
- Deny the request.

Within thirty-days (30) of written notification that the records are available for inspection or copying, the requestor must claim or review the assembled records, or make other arrangements. At the end of the thirty-day (30) notification period, the request may be considered closed for failure to claim or review the records or make other arrangements.

Records Exempt From Disclosure

The Public Records Acts provides that a number of types of documents are exempt from public inspection and copying. An inclusive list of exemptions and prohibition statues is listed in Appendix C of the Public Records Act for Washington Cities and Counties on line at www.mrsc.org/Publications/pr06.pdf

Costs For Providing Copies of Public Records

- Inspection of public records - No fee.
- Paper copies - Fifteen cents per page for standard black and white photocopies. Actual cost for nonstandard copies. A ten percent deposit may be required. The fee may be waived if the expense of processing the payment exceeds the costs of providing the copies. If fees are set by state or federal law, that fee will be charged.
- Electronic copies of records on floppy disk or CD-ROM - Five Dollars (\$5.00).
- Audio cassette recordings - Ten Dollars (\$10.00).
- Mailing - actual cost of mailing, plus cost of shipping container may be charged.
- Payment - Cash, cashier's check, or money order payable to Skamania County. No personal checks accepted.

In compliance with the Public Records Act, Skamania County adopted Ordinance 2006-09 Establishing Public Records Procedures on October 31, 2006 for enforcement of reasonable rules and regulations to provide full public access to public records, to protect public records from damage or disorganization, and to prevent excessive interference with other essential functions of the County. A copy of Ordinance 2006-09 may be obtained by calling 509-427-3700 or viewed on Skamania County's website at www.skamaniacounty.org.