

Columbiana County Health District

P.O. Box 309 – 7360 State Route 45 – Lisbon, Ohio 44432
Phone: 330-424-0272 – General Fax: 330-424-1733 – Nursing Fax: 330-424-1843
Email: cchd@columbiana-health.org Web: www.columbiana-health.org

Public Records Request Policy, June 2020

Revised August 2, 2021

MISSION STATEMENT: It is the mission and intent of the Columbiana County Health District to fully comply with Ohio’s Public Records Act and utilizes this policy to achieve the intent of providing timely and open access to public records that are maintained by the health district.

DEFINING PUBLIC RECORDS: A “record” is defined to include the following: A document in any format – paper or electronic that is created, received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of the Columbiana County Health District that documents the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office. A “public record” is a “record” that is being kept by the agency at the time a public records request is made, subject to applicable exemptions from disclosure under Ohio or federal law.

RESPONSE TIMEFRAME: Public records are to be available for inspection during regular business hours. Every effort will be made for public records to be made available for inspection as promptly as reasonably possible. Copies of public records will also be made available within a reasonable period of time. “Prompt” and “reasonable” take into account the volume of records requested, staffing availability, the necessity for any legal review and redaction, and other facts and circumstances of the records requested.

HANDLING REQUESTS: An agency public record request form is to be used as necessary by the requestor or the Columbiana County Health District. No specific language is required to make a request for public records. However, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the office to identify, retrieve, and review the records. The requester is not required to make a records request in writing, and is not required to provide his or her identity or the intended use of the requested public record(s).

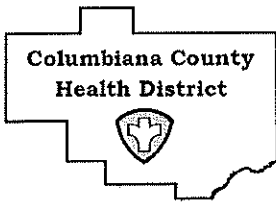
However, the law does permit the office to ask for a written request, the requester’s identity, and/or the intended use of the information requested, but only if:

(1) a written request or disclosure of identity or intended use would benefit the requester by enhancing the office’s ability to identify, locate, or deliver the public records that have been requested; and

(2) the requester is first told that a written request is not required and that the requester may decline to reveal the requester’s identity or intended use.

In processing the request, the office does not have an obligation to create new records or perform a search or research for information in the office’s records. An electronic record

*Board Approved
8/18/21*



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is deemed to exist so long as a computer is already programmed to produce the record through the office's standard use of sorting, filtering, or querying features.

In processing a request for inspection of a public record, an agency employee will accompany the requester during inspection to make certain original records are not removed or modified.

ELECTRONIC RECORDS: Electronic records are to be treated in the same as records in other formats, such as paper. All agency employees retain electronic records in accordance with applicable agency records retention schedules.

DENIAL AND REDACTION OF RECORDS: If the requester makes an ambiguous or overly broad request or has difficulty in making a request such that the office cannot reasonably identify what public records are being requested, the request may be denied, but the office must then provide the requester an opportunity to revise the request by informing the requester of the manner in which records are maintained and accessed by the office. If the office withholds, redacts, or otherwise denies requested records, it will provide an explanation, including legal authority, for the denial(s). If portions of a record are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions may be redacted or withheld. When making public records available for public inspection or copying, the agency will notify the requester of any redaction or make the redaction plainly visible.

COPYING AND MAILING COSTS: Those seeking public records may be charged the actual cost of making copies at a fee established by the Board of Health. A requester may be required to pay in advance for the actual costs involved in providing the copy (s). If a requester asks that documents be delivered to them, they may be charged the actual cost of the postage and mailing supplies, or other actual costs of delivery. There is no charge for e-mailed documents.

MANAGING RECORDS: The Columbiana County Health District's records are subject to records retention schedules. The office's current schedules are available at: 7360 SR 45, Lisbon, Ohio 44432.

Questions regarding public records can be directed to the agency Health Commissioner at cchd@columbiana-health.org who serves as the Public Records Custodian. (8/2/21)