

 KITSAP PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT	POLICIES & PROCEDURES	
Subject: Legal Policy	Number: L-3	Page 1 of 3
Title: PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS	Effective Date: 3/12/13	
Initial Approval By: Management Team	Date: 9/12/06	
Periodic Review By: Management Team	Date: 3/12/16	
Applies to: All Employees, Interns, Volunteers, and General Public	Revision Dates: 6/13/08, 3/12/13	

A. Purpose

This policy provides procedures for persons wishing to request access to public records of the District and establishes processes for both requestors and District staff to assist members of the public in obtaining such access to comply with the Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW. The public is encouraged to access public records available on the District’s website at kitsappublichealth.org before submitting a public records request.

B. Implementing Procedures

1. **What is a Public Record?** A public record is any record relating to the conduct of government or the performance of a governmental function and which is prepared, used, or retained by the District. The record may be in a variety of forms such as writing, recording, picture, electronic disk, magnetic tape, database, or e-mail.
2. **What Records are Available for Inspection?** All records maintained by the District are available for public inspection unless the law specifically exempts them. These exemptions are listed in the Public Records Act, Chapter 42.56 RCW. Other exemptions are found elsewhere in Washington law and in federal law.
3. **How Much Does It Cost to Receive Copies of Public Records?** There is no fee for viewing District records. Records may be inspected during regular business hours at the District’s main office located at the Norm Dicks Government Center, 345 Sixth Street, Suite 300, in Bremerton, WA. Public records must be protected from disorganization, loss, or alteration, therefore, records may not be removed from a viewing area.

There is a \$0.15 per page charge to receive copies of records. Payment for copies is required in advance. Additional fees may be charged for postage and non standard copies; these include color copies and copies of over-sized documents and photographs. If copies are produced in installments, the District requires payment for an installment before remaining installments are made available to a requestor. Payment can be made in cash, or by check, money order, or credit card.

4. **Public Records Officer.** The District’s Public Records Officer may be contacted at:

Public Records Officer
Kitsap Public Health District
345 Sixth Street, Suite 300
Bremerton, WA 98337
(360) 337-5235 (phone)
(360) 475-9202 (fax)
records@kitsappublichealth.org

5. How to Make a Public Records Request. Any person wishing to inspect or request copies of the District's public records may use the District's request form (see **Attachment A**, Public Record Request Form) addressed to the Public Records Officer. Requests should include the following information:

- Requestor's name, mailing address, daytime telephone number, and e-mail address;
- Identification of the public records being requested; and
- The date and time of day of the request.

Public records requests must be sent to the attention of the Public Records Officer in the following ways:

- a. Via the District Website:** A public records request may be submitted on-line at the District's website: [Public Records Request | Kitsap Public Health District | kitsappublichealth.org](http://PublicRecordsRequest|KitsapPublicHealthDistrict|kitsappublichealth.org)
- b. Via Mail:** Public Records Requests mailed via U.S. mail should be addressed to the attention of the Public Records Officer or delivered in person to the Help Desk on the third floor at the Health District's main office. The District's main office is located at the Norm Dicks Government Center, 345 Sixth Street, Suite 300, in Bremerton, WA. The District's customary office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., excluding weekends and holidays.
- c. Via E-Mail:** Public records requests may also be sent to this e-mail address only: records@kitsappublichealth.org.
- d. Via Fax:** Fax requests to this fax number only: (360) 475-9202.
- e. Via Telephone:** Verbal requests may be made to this number only: (360) 337-5235.

A records request is considered received when the District receives it, not when the record request is sent. In most cases, it is not necessary for the requestor to explain why a record is needed. However, it may be necessary to ask the requestor for specific information to process the request. Within five business days of receipt of a request, the District will do one or more of the following:

- Make requested records available for inspection or copying.
- Provide a link to the District's website that contains the specific requested records.
- Acknowledge receipt of the request and provide a reasonable estimate of when requested records will be available.
- Seek clarification of an unclear request.
- Deny a request and cite the legal exemption(s) supporting the denial.

The District may need additional time to respond to a request for the following reasons:

- To clarify a request;
- Locate and assemble records to respond to a request;
- Notify third persons or agencies affected by a request and provide them with the opportunity to seek a court order preventing disclosure where appropriate; and/or
- Determine whether a record is exempt from disclosure. A list of common exemptions can be found in Appendix A. These are common exemptions and a request for a record may be denied based on an exemption not listed here.

If a requester fails to clarify an unclear request, the District will treat the request as withdrawn.

The District may produce copies of requested records on a partial or installment basis. If an installment is not claimed or reviewed by a requester within 30 days, the District may choose not to fulfill the balance of the request and close the request.

If a request for public record is denied, the District will provide a written statement specifying the reason(s) for denial, including the legal exemption being relied upon and how it applies to the record being withheld, as well as how to request reconsideration of the decision.

If the District denies a request, the requestor may ask the District to conduct an internal review of its denial within two business days after denial by sending a request to the District's Public Records Officer.

Under the Washington State Public Records Act, the District is not required to create new public records or provide information in a format that is different from an existing public record.

Commercial use of any lists of individuals is prohibited.

A request for a public record is a public record itself and is subject to disclosure under the Act.

If the requestor has any questions regarding a pending request or this policy, they should contact the District's Public Records Officer at (360) 337-5235 or at records@kitsappublichealth.org.

- 6. Organization of Public Records.** The District maintains its records in a reasonably organized manner and takes reasonable actions to protect records from disorganization and damage as outlined in the District's Records Management Policy A-30. The District finds that maintaining a public records index (as provided in RCW 42.56.070) for use by the public would be unduly burdensome, costly, and would interfere with District operations given the small size of the District and the high volume and types of public records generated and received by the District.
- 7. Training.** All District employees receive basic training on public records compliance and records retention. Members of the District's Records Committee and the Public Records Officer receive more thorough, ongoing training with the goal of ensuring compliance with public records laws and to ensure that the District's records are managed effectively and efficiently.

C. References

- RCW 42.56