



COLLIN COUNTY

Public Information Office
2300 Bloomdale Road
McKinney, Texas 75071
www.collincountytx.gov

The following protocol for managing Public Information Act/Freedom of Information Act requests was adopted by the Commissioners Court in September 2003:

1. All public information requests submitted to Commissioners' Court or a reporting department of Commissioners' Court should promptly submit the request to the county Public Information Officers (PIOs) within the business day of receipt with the date and time of receipt stamped on the document.

It will be the decision of the department directors and elected officials outside Commissioners' Court as to whether or not they choose to use the public information service. If the department directors or elected officials chose to use the service, the usage must remain consistent.
2. The PIOs will insure responses to the requests. If the PIOs are absent, this duty will be in the hands of Administrative Services personnel. However, the PIOs must depend on department directors or elected officials to locate and compile the information. Department directors and elected officials are considered agents of public information in the county. Because of this, it is also requested that they keep track of personnel time taken to compile the information.
3. Public information in the county is to be compiled -- not created. If information is contained within copied data that is not requested or is considered confidential, the information is to be marked through.
4. If department directors or elected officials have questions about whether or not the requested information should be released, they are to quickly contact the PIOs who will then seek advisement from the County Administrator or county attorney. If it is deemed appropriate by the attorney and a member of the Commissioners' Court, the County will file an inquiry with the state Attorney General's office.
5. Within the first day of receipt, it is the responsibility of the PIOs or County Administrator to notify the appropriate department director or elected official about the requested information.
6. Requests must be submitted in written by email, mail or fax. A form will also be made available for requestors, but it is not mandated. (See Appendix A.)
7. All requests resulting in the production of more than 1 copy; requests resulting in the search of more than one building; or requests that take at least one hour of computer technology time will result in a fee.

All fees are to be in accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, which is established by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission. (See Appendix B.)
8. If a charge is anticipated by a department director or elected official, they are to notify the PIOs immediately. The PIOs will then notify the requestor of the anticipated charge.
9. Requestors may pick-up the information at the Commissioners' Court office or receive the information through the mail. They may also view the information at a County facility.
10. Checks or cash must either be hand-delivered by requestors upon pick-up or mailed. Administrative Services personnel will manage the receipt book. Each business day that money is received, it is the responsibility of this department to hand-deliver the check or cash to the treasurer, who will then deposit the money into the general fund. The Administrative Services Department will keep a copy of the receipt and will mail a receipt to the requestor.

Funds must be received before the information is mailed to the requestor. Or, the requestor may hand-deliver the check upon time of pick-up at the Commissioners' Court office. If the amount of the request is believed to be more than \$40, a deposit must be made by the requestor.

11. All information must be compiled within 10 days. If there is a pending Attorney General question, the requestor must be advised within those 10 days.
12. The PIOs will follow all policies set forth by the State in responding to information requests.
13. The PIOs will establish an education workshop for department directors and elected officials on the basics of information requests before the end of the calendar year.
14. The policies and procedures should go into effect October 1st, 2003 and continue until the state sets new guidelines.
15. A copy of the Public Information Act rights must be posted outside the Public Information Office. (Appendix C)

Internal Amendment (July 17, 2006) – Internal policy (not court adopted)

1. Some requested items may not be deemed part of the Public Information Act. Collin County will make a good faith effort in assisting the requestor by researching the sought information. Although some records are made public via means unassociated with the Public Information Act, Collin County will remain consistent in its fee schedule.
2. Elected officials may opt to utilize the Public Information Officers for compiling information deemed public by means outside of the Public Information Act. In doing so, the PIOs will follow the same processes established by the Public Information Act and the Commissioners Court.