

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Policy

(Adopted October 2016; revised July 2017)

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a state statute that provides the public the right to access government documents and records. The premise behind FOIA is that the public has a right to know what the government, and its subsidiary bodies, is doing. The law provides that a person can ask a public body for a copy of its records on a specific subject and the public body must provide those records, unless there is an exemption in the statute that protects those records from disclosure (for example: records containing information concerning personal privacy).

The Stickney-Forest View Public Library District is committed to providing citizens and taxpayers access to applicable public records under the Act. All requests must be in writing and should be directed to Leighton Shell, the Library's designated Freedom of Information Officer. Requests may be submitted by facsimile, U.S. mail, special carrier, or email, and may be made using the attached form. While not a requirement, the form is intended to assist the requester in the specifics of the request. There is no requirement under the Act to respond to oral requests or to provide information other than what already exists in records.

The Library shall respond to a written request for public records within five (5) working days after the day of receipt, or twenty-one (21) days if the request is for a commercial purpose. The FOIA Officer will respond with information regarding access to the information, request an extension under the Act, or deny the request in writing. Denial of the request will occur if the public records requested fall within one of the specific exemptions of the Act. If only part of the request is denied, and access will be given to the remainder, it will be stated in the response. Any denial will include the reason and legal citation. Should the scope of the request create an undue burden on the Library, the response will indicate how the request poses an undue burden, and the Requester will have the opportunity to reduce the request to manageable proportions.

When records are provided, the maximum copying fees for requests of more than fifty (50) letter or legal size black and white pages is 10¢ per page, with no charge for copies for a request of less than fifty (50) pages. If copies are non-standard size and/or in color, the Library will charge its actual cost for reproducing the records. Any and all fees will be consistent with applicable subsections of the Act. The cost for certifying a record is \$1.00.

If the Requester chooses to inspect the records instead of requesting copies, an employee must be present throughout the inspection. Records will be made available by appointment on weekdays, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. excluding holidays. In response to requests for inspection, the Library will make records available for up to 30 days after which time, if the inspection has not occurred, or a mutually agreed upon arrangement has not been made, the Library will consider the request to be withdrawn.

Related

Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140)

SFVPLD Freedom of Information Act Request Form