

**Cuyahoga County Agency of Inspector General
(AIG)
Procedure**

Procedure Name: Public Records Request

Original Effective Date: 7/11/2023

Revision Date(s): 3/26/2025

Approved By: Alexandra Beeler, Inspector General

- A. The AIG receives public records requests (“PRRs”) by any method or medium, including through e-mail to InspectorGeneral@cuyahogacounty.gov, phone call to (216) 698-2101, in-person or other written communication, or direct request to a member of the AIG staff.
- B. Any AIG employee intaking a PRR must be mindful of the following:
 - 1. The request should specifically and particularly describe the record being sought. A request for information, as opposed to a particular record, may not be a legally adequate request.
 - 2. The requester is not required to put his/her request in writing. However, a request in writing will assist the AIG in understanding and complying with the request. If there is no written request, the AIG employee should write down the request as verbally given and read it back to the requester. This will assist the AIG in providing exactly what has been requested.
 - 3. The requester does not have to provide his/her name. If the requester does not provide a name, be sure to document the date of the request and confirm the delivery method or address in order to keep track of the request and response.
 - 4. The requester is not required to give a reason why he/she is requesting the records. However, it is permissible to ask the reason for the request as long as the inquiry is for the purpose of assisting the AIG in determining which records are best suited to accurately and fully respond to the request.
- C. If someone other than the Case Research Analyst (“CRA”) receives the PRR, they immediately notify the CRA, the First Assistant Deputy Inspector General (“FA”), or the Inspector General (“IG”); if either the FA or the IG is notified, they will notify the CRA.
- D. Once the CRA has been notified, the CRA enters the PRR into the Case Management and Tracking System (“CMTS”) as a PRR matter. The CRA is assigned to the matter unless otherwise instructed by the IG or FA.

- E. A preliminary review is conducted to determine whether the matter may be outstanding with any other investigatory and/or law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the matter. If it is, the requester is notified that the request cannot be fulfilled until the outside matter is concluded.
- F. Either the IG or FA reviews the request. The IG or FA determines, with aid of the Ohio Attorney General's Sunshine Law Manual, if the information requested constitutes a public record.
 - 1. If the information requested is not a public record or is otherwise properly withheld from release, the IG or FA approves a response to the requestor to deny the request, and includes appropriate follow-up steps as necessary. The CMTS matter is then closed.
 - i. The AIG is under no legal duty to create a new record or perform a new analysis of existing records in response to a PRR.
 - 2. If the information requested is a public record, but subject to redaction, the IG or FA reviews the records and approves the redaction of any information that should not be disseminated in response to the PRR. When the response has been properly redacted, including any appropriate citations, the IG or FA approves the response to the requestor with the redacted response and an explanation of the redactions as necessary. The CMTS matter is then closed.
 - 3. If the information requested is a public record and no redactions are required, the IG or FA approves the response to the requestor. The CMTS matter is then closed.
- G. The requester has a right to receive the record in the medium that the requester prefers (e.g., paper copy or email), as long as the AIG determines it can reasonably be duplicated as part of normal operations. For duplication of public records on paper, the AIG may charge the requester five cents (\$.05) per page for each photocopy. For duplication of public records on any other medium (e.g., flash drive) the AIG may charge its actual cost to accomplish the duplication.
- H. PRRs are a priority. Accordingly, the AIG will make every reasonable effort to provide a timely response.

See: Policy Document – Public Records Request