

-PUBLIC RECORDS-

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

The following person(s) are Records Access Officer(s) and can assist you in obtaining access to and copies of public records. As additional Records Access Officer(s) are appointed, this list will be updated.

Lori West
Town Clerk and Records Access Officer
Municipal Building
253 Atlantic Avenue
Hull, MA 02045
781-925-2000, ext. 3803
lwest@town.hull.ma.us

GUIDELINES FOR MAKING INFORMED REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

1. While you can make your request to the Records Access Officer(s) listed above, you can also make the request directly to the Department, Official or Agency (Records Custodian) you believe has the records you seek. If you are uncertain as to which Department, Official or Agency may have the records, you can ask the Records Access Officer(s) for assistance.
2. If the request is made to a Records Access Officer(s) who is not the custodian of the records you seek, your request will be forwarded to those Records Custodians the Records Access Officer(s) believes may have the records you seek. There may be others who have custody of the records you seek and if you are aware of such information, you should provide that along with your request. The Records Custodian and Records Access Officer(s) will work to respond to your request. Thus, making the request to the Records Custodian directly will often result in a quicker response.
3. Requests can be made orally or in writing. However it is made, it is necessary that you **provide a reasonable description of the requested record**.
4. As in the past, most public records requests can and will be responded to immediately. However, due to staff demands, the need to research and review records and for other reasons (i.e. privacy and protected information issues) some requests may take longer. We will try to give you our best estimate as to when the records will be produced in accordance with the law.
5. Some requests may require the payment in advance of a fee. You will be advised if that is the case. Fees are based on a number of factors, including the

time spent to locate the records, review same for possible redaction and privacy-protected information issues if necessary, any redaction time necessary and time and expense to make copies. If the records need to be mailed there may be a postage charge. You can also arrange to pick up the records. If possible, we will send the records to you electronically.

6. Thus, you may want to be as specific as you can in providing the reasonable description of the records you seek as the more specific and clear you are, the quicker we can respond. For example, requests for copies of all minutes where licenses were approved for a long period of time will take more time than a request for minutes for a specific meeting or licensee. However, you are certainly permitted to make broad requests as long as they provide a reasonable description of what you are seeking.
7. If we are unable to respond to your request you will be advised in writing.
8. Different Records Access Officer(s)/Records Custodian(s) maintain different records. A listing of categories of records maintained by the various Records Custodians will be made available in a supplement to these Guidelines. However, here is a list of categories of public records maintained by most Records Custodians, presuming they are within the scope of the Records Custodian responsibilities.
 - a. Applications for permits and licenses and actions taken Plans and drawings
 - b. Inspection Reports and violation notices
 - c. Miscellaneous and specific correspondence
 - d. Notices from other Town entities, the state and federal government'
 - e. Agendas, Notices and Minutes of meetings
 - f. Invoices, charges and the like to and from the Records Custodian if applicable
9. The state's new law on public records is very new and regulations have only recently been issued by the state. We will be updating our Guidelines and providing additional information over time. However, feel free to ask the Records Access Officer(s) for information or ask the Records Custodian which may be involved with the records you seek for assistance.
10. We welcome your comments and suggestions. Our goal is to provide the best practices in accordance with the law.
11. Massachusetts law provides you with certain rights regarding public records. You should consult those laws for more information. The General Laws regarding public records and requests include G.L. c. 4, section 7, clause 26, G.L. c. 66, and 950 CMR 32.00. The Supervisor of Public Records' (617-727-2832; One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108) website, <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/preidx.htm> , provides additional information.