

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION REGULATIONS

Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) is committed to full compliance with Virginia's Freedom of Information Act (VFOIA), and processes all requests for information in accordance with the procedures listed below. Only existing documents are subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Dr. Elizabeth Hoover, Chief Technology Officer, is Alexandria City Public Schools' FOIA Officer. The FOIA Officer serves as a point of contact for members of the public in requesting public records and coordinates the School Board's compliance with FOIA. The FOIA Officer may be reached at Elizabeth.hoover@acps.k12.va.us or 703-619-8005.

Access to Records

1. Official records subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act will be e-mailed to the requester where possible; alternately, they are open during the regular office hours of ACPS's Central Office.
2. When practicable, the following records shall be available on request at Central Office:
 - General Correspondence
 - Personnel and Employment Records
 - Press Releases
 - Procurement Records
 - Reports and Studies
 - School Board Meeting Minutes
 - Testing Data
3. Unless otherwise specified by the FOIA Officer, inspection of records not e-mailed takes place at ACPS Central Office, and records are not removed from that site. Copies may be requested in lieu of or at the time of inspection, subject to the charges listed below. Nonexempt records maintained in an electronic database are produced in any tangible medium or format identified by the requester that is regularly used in the ordinary course of business by ACPS, including posting the records on a website or delivering the records through an electronic mail address provided by the requester.
4. Proof of name and legal address may be requested before inspecting or receiving copies of any records to confirm that the requester is:
 - a representative of a newspaper or magazine with circulation in the Commonwealth or of a radio or television station broadcasting in or into the Commonwealth, or
 - a citizen of the Commonwealth.

The FOIA Officer or designee is present during and documents each inspection or copying of records.

Request Procedures

1. Requests for access to records shall be made with reasonable specificity.
2. Requests shall be directed to the Alexandria City Public Schools FOIA Officer at:
Elizabeth Hoover, Ph.D.
Chief Technology Officer
Alexandria City Public Schools
1340 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-619-8005
Elizabeth.hoover@acps.k12.va.us
3. Any requests received by staff are immediately forwarded to the FOIA Officer with a notation indicating the date and time the request was received.
4. A copy of this regulation is provided upon request.

Responding to Requests

1. Promptly, but in all cases within five working days of receiving the request, the school division will provide the requested records to the requester, or make one of the following responses in writing:
 - (a) The requested records are being entirely withheld. The response will identify with reasonable particularity the volume and subject matter of the withheld records and with respect to each category of withheld records, cite the specific Virginia Code section(s) that authorize(s) the withholding of records.
 - (b) The requested records are being provided in part and are being withheld in part. The response will identify with reasonable particularity the subject matter of the withheld portions and cite, with respect to each category of withheld records, the specific Virginia Code section(s) which authorize the withholding of records.
 - (c) The requested records could not be found or do not exist. If the school division knows another public body has the requested records, the response includes contact information for the other public body.
 - (d) It is not practically possible to provide the records or to determine whether they are available within the five-day period. Such response specifies the conditions which make a response impossible. If such response is made within five working days, one of the preceding responses, (a), (b) or (c), is provided within an additional seven-day period.

No public record is withheld in its entirety on the grounds that some portion of the public record is excluded from disclosure by law. A public record may be withheld from disclosure in its entirety only to the extent that an exclusion from disclosure applies to the entire content of the public record. Otherwise, only those portions of the public record containing information subject to an exclusion may be withheld, and all portions of the public record that are not so excluded are disclosed.

The school division may petition the appropriate court for additional time to respond to a request for records when the request is for an extraordinary volume of records or requires an extraordinarily lengthy search, and a response within the time outlined above will prevent the school division from meeting its operational responsibilities. Before proceeding with the petition, the school division will make reasonable efforts to reach an agreement with the requester concerning the production of records requested.

2. The five-day period begins on the first working day following the day the request is received by the school division, and ends at the close of business on the fifth working day following receipt of the request. Any time that elapses between the time the requester is notified of an advance cost determination pursuant to the procedures detailed below and the time that the requester responds to that notice is not counted in calculating the five working days.

Processing of Requests

1. The FOIA Officer, after receiving a request, promptly makes an initial determination as to whether the requested records will be provided to the requester, will be withheld, either completely or in part, or if it is practically impossible to provide the requested records or to determine whether they are available within five days.
2. If the FOIA Officer is unsure whether the requested documents should be provided to the requester, legal advice is promptly sought.
3. If the FOIA Officer is uncertain whether the requested records exist or where they may be located, efforts are promptly initiated to locate the records or determine whether they exist.
4. If the requested records will be made available either in whole or in part, the FOIA Officer promptly consults with Central Office staff to determine the cost involved to assemble the records for inspection and copying. All requests for documents that require more than 15 minutes of staff time to compile are subject to charges. Where portions of individual records must be redacted prior to inspection and copying, the cost of doing this shall also be taken into account. Charges are based upon the following rates (subject to change, not to exceed the actual cost):
 - Data system searches (e.g., e-mail, student information system): \$50 per hour
 - Professional staff time: \$30 per hour

- Clerical and secretarial staff time: \$18 per hour
 - Photocopying/printing: 12 cents per page
 - Formatting expenses will vary and will be charged accordingly
5. If the requester has asked for an advance determination of the cost, or if the cost is expected to exceed \$200, the requester shall be notified in advance of the cost associated with the request. If the cost of the request is determined to exceed \$200, the School Board may, before continuing to process the request, require the requester to agree to payment of a deposit not to exceed the amount of the advance determination. The deposit shall be credited toward the final cost of supplying the requested records. No further action shall be taken until the requester responds, and the requester must agree to pay the estimated amount before any further processing of the request is performed.
 6. Before processing a request for records, the FOIA Officer may require the requester to pay any amounts owed to ACPS for previous requests for records that remain unpaid 30 days or more after billing.
 7. If school division records have been transferred to any entity, including any other public body, for storage, maintenance or archiving, the school division remains the custodian of the records for purposes of responding to requests and is responsible for retrieving and supplying the records to the requester.
 8. Any records to be disclosed shall be assembled for inspection and copying by Central Office staff members, under the direction and supervision of the FOIA Officer.
 9. Central Office staff are responsible for recording the date the request was received, and recording and assembling additional information about the request.

Established: June 1, 2006

Revised: July 2, 2007

Revised: September 14, 2007

Revised: June 23, 2016

Revised: December 15, 2016

Revised: December 20, 2018

Legal Refs: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 2.2-3704, 2.2-3704.01, 2.2-3704.2.

Cross Refs.: IFB Approval Process for Research Studies

KBA Requests for Information

KBE Internet Privacy