

Freedom of Information Act Requests

Richland One Middle College recognizes the right of any person, under provision of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, as amended, to inspect or receive copies of any public record. Our FOIA procedures are designed to promote open government, citizen involvement and organizational accountability.

Any member of the public can review or obtain school records that are determined to be public under the provisions of the FOIA. In order to maintain the effective functioning of a school office or department and for security reasons, certain conditions for reviewing or obtaining copies of records may apply.

Submitting a Request

All requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) must be submitted in writing to the school's active principal. You may send your request by email or by letter to:

Richland One Middle College
c/o The Principal's Office
316 S. Beltline Blvd, Richland Hall 131
Columbia, SC 29205
carla.brabham2@richlandone.org

Required information

Please include all information listed below in the FOIA request:

- Your full name
- Full address including street, city, state and zip code
- Email address
- Telephone number
- A detailed description of the public records you are requesting
- Date of request
- Organization
- Signed statement that the information will not be used for commercial solicitation
- Justification if requesting reduction in or waiver of fees

Deadlines

For current records, Richland One Middle College has 10 business days (excluding weekends and legal public holidays) to determine if the record requested is publicly available under the FOIA. Following notification of the determination to the person making the request, or, if a deposit has been requested and has been paid, the school then has 30 calendar days to actually produce the records responding to the FOIA request.

For records that are more than 24 months old, the school has 20 business days (excluding weekends and legal public holidays) to determine if the information requested is publicly available and 35 calendar days after notifying the requestor of its determination or, after a requested deposit has been paid, to actually produce the records.

All deadlines may be extended by mutual agreement of the requester and the school and this agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Fees

Section 30-4-30(B) of the FOIA allows the school to charge reasonable fees for the search, retrieval, or redaction of records. The fees must represent the lowest possible cost and cannot exceed the actual cost of producing the requested records. If it is determined by the school that the information requested is primarily benefiting the general public, the school may reduce or waive the fee.

A deposit not to exceed 25 percent of the total reasonably anticipated costs for production of the records will be required prior to searching for or making copies of records. This includes, but is not limited to, charges for staff time and the cost of searching, retrieving, redacting and copying records. Any applicable fees must be paid prior to receipt of the requested records.

The law does not require the school to generate or create records that do not exist.

The requester has the right to receive an electronic transmission of the public record, if those records are in an electronic format. If records are not in electronic format and the school agrees to produce them in electronic format, the school may charge for the staff time required to transfer the documents to electronic format. Fees may be charged for search time, but no copy charges will apply to records transmitted in an electronic format.

Once the school receives a written FOIA request, the school will provide the requester with an estimate of the costs. The requester must send a deposit of 25 percent of the estimated cost before the school will begin the process of producing the records requested. The remaining balance of the cost must be paid at the time of production of the records.

Richland One Middle College uses the following fee structure for filling FOIA requests:

- No charge for a single request for compilation and/or reproduction of up to 10 pages of readily available information
- A charge of 25 cents (25¢) per page will be assessed for a single request of 11 or more pages.
- Costs of material and personnel time will be assessed for the compilation and/or reproduction of any material that is deemed to require extensive staff time to compile.
- Mailing costs will be assessed as charged by the U.S. Postal Service. Non-standard sizes will be billed at the actual cost to Richland One Middle College.
- A fee deposit not exceeding 25% of the total reasonable anticipated cost is required prior to searching for and/or copying requested records.
- Fees will not exceed the prorated annual salary of the lowest paid employee, who had the necessary skills and training to search, retrieve, or redact the records.
- Payment in full is due prior to the release of any records. The district reserves the right to waive fees.