



Procedure Summary

The purpose of the procedure is to assist East Texas A&M University (the University) employees with compliance with the Texas Public Information Act and to provide procedures for managing public information requests and compiling responses.

This procedure is required by System Regulation *61.01.02 Public Information*, which establishes the procedures for receiving, referring, and responding to public information requests.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1 GENERAL

- 1.1 The Texas Public Information Act provides that each member's chief executive officer (CEO) is the officer for public information responsible for preserving and caring for the member's public records. The President has designated the Vice President for Finance and Administration (VPFA) as the public information officer (PIO). The VPFA has designated the Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Finance and Administration as the public information coordinator. As the public information coordinator, the executive assistant will compile and coordinate responses to all public information requests under the Texas Public Information Act and associated requirements.
- 1.2 The CEO will ensure that the PIO's office and mailing address, the university's open records email address, and a link to the electronic open records portal are prominently displayed and easily accessible on the university's website.
- 1.3 The public information coordinator will distribute public information requests to the appropriate colleges, departments, or divisions to gather responsive information.
- 1.4 The public information coordinator will notify the PIO, Chief of Staff, and President of requests that may have public relations significance, as appropriate. The President will inform or brief the appropriate Marketing Communications personnel of any requests that may have media significance.

2 RECEIPT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS

Manner of Receipt

2.1 All public information requests must be submitted to the PIO in writing via one of the following methods:

- Hand delivery to the PIOs Office (McDowell Administration Building, Suite 297)
- US mail (ATTN: VPFA Office, East Texas A&M University, PO Box 3011, Commerce, TX 75429)
- Email (publicinformationrequest@tamuc.edu)
- [A&M-Commerce electronic open records portal](#)

2.2 A governmental body may not inquire into the purpose of a request.

2.3 All requests received directly by a department, by mail or hand delivery, shall be forwarded immediately upon receipt to the office of the Vice President for Finance and delivered to the VPFA or the Executive Assistant to the VPFA.

3 RESPONSES TO PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS

3.1 All colleges, departments, and divisions shall provide the information requested to the public information coordinator within five business days. If the information cannot be produced by that time, the public information coordinator shall be contacted within that time frame. All responses to requests for public information shall be distributed by the public information coordinator to the requestor via the electronic open records portal.

3.2 A response to a public information request includes responsive documents that exist at the time of a request.

3.2.1 A governmental body is not required to create new documents in response to a request.

3.2.2 A database, as it exists at the time of a request, is considered an existing document.

3.3 The public information coordinator will assist with cost estimates described in System Regulation 61.01.02, Section 4.

3.3.1 Cost estimates shall be provided to the public information coordinator within five business days of receipt of the request and provided to the requestor no later than ten business days after a request is received.

3.3.2 All charges will reflect rates approved by the Office of the Attorney General.

3.3.3 Actual work should not be done until the requestor agrees to the cost estimate. However, public information should not be withheld for receipt of payment.

3.4 All decisions regarding withholding or releasing records will be made in accordance with System Regulation 61.01.02, Section 5.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy [*61.01 Public Information Act Compliance*](#)

System Regulation [*61.01.02 Public Information*](#)

Definitions

“Public Information” and “Open Records” are used simultaneously.

Revision History

Approved August 24, 2009

Reviewed January 16, 2014

Revised February 28, 2020

Contact Office

Vice President for Finance and Administration

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