

Public Disclosure Requests Procedures

The City of Lakewood is committed to providing full access to public records in accordance with the Washington State Public Records Act (RCW 42.56) and any other applicable provisions of federal or state law. These procedures are to provide for the fullest assistance to requesters and the timeliest possible action on requests.

Public Records Officer

The City Clerk is designated as the public records officer for whom members of the public may direct requests for disclosure of public records. The public disclosure officer may be contacted at:

Lakewood City Hall
6000 Main Street SW
Lakewood, WA 98499
(253) 589-2489 (phone)
(253) 589-3774 (fax)
PRR@cityoflakewood.us

South Sound 911 (SS911) maintains law enforcement records for the City of Lakewood. The City will accept requests for records held by SS911 or a requester may make such requests to SS911 directly at:

South Sound 911 (SS911)
945 Tacoma Avenue S
Tacoma, WA 98402

Requests for Public Records

It is encouraged that all Public Records Requests be made in writing. A prescribed Public Records Request form is available above. Requests may be mailed, faxed, emailed, hand delivered or telephoned. The request should include the following information:

- Name and address of the requester;
- Other contact information including telephone number and an email address (if available);
- The date of the request;
- A detailed description of the public record being requested;
- Whether the requester wants to inspect the records or have copies provided for a fee plus postage fees and where the copies are to be sent if mailed.

If the request is for police records, the request should include the following information:

- Case Number
- Name(s) of parties involved
- Date(s) of birth of parties involved
- Date, time and location of incident

Response to Requests

The City will process requests in the order allowing the most requests to be processed in the most efficient manner. The City will respond to a request within five (5) business days and shall respond by:

- Notifying the requester that documents are available; or
- Send a letter acknowledging that the City has received the request and provide a reasonable estimate of the time the City will require to respond; or
- Seek clarification of the request. If the requester fails to clarify the request, the City will treat the request as having been withdrawn and close the request.
- Deny the records request.

Additional time to respond to a request may be based upon the need to clarify the intent of the request, to locate and assemble the information requested, to notify third persons or agencies affected by the request, and/or to determine whether whether any of the information requested is exempt and subject to redaction.

The Public Records Act does not require the City to answer requests for information or general questions, create new public records, or provide information in a format that is different from the original public record(s).

Installment Responses

The public records officer may provide access for inspection and copying in installments. If within 30 days of the notice of availability of the responsive records, the requester fails to inspect the set of records or claim one or more of the installments, the public records officer may stop processing the remainder of the request and close it.

Inspection of Records

After notification to the requester of the availability of the responsive records, the public records will be made available for inspection and/or copying during the normal business hours of the City (currently 8:30 a.m. through 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday of each week, except on legal holidays and unless otherwise established by the City Manager.)

In order that public records maintained on the premises of the City may be protected from damage or disorganization as required by the Public Records Act, the following procedures and practices are hereby instituted:

1. The City shall provide space to inspect public records.
2. City staff may be present during the inspection of records.
3. No public record may be removed for the viewing area, marked, defaced, torn, damaged, destroyed, disassembled or removed from its proper location or order, or altered.
4. No fee is charged for the inspection of public records
5. To select a paper record for copying during an inspection, a requester must flag the page or document by use of a non-permanent method such as a removable adhesive note.

Copying of Public Records

A requester shall indicate which document(s) they wish the City to copy. Since copying facilities are located in the "employee only" areas of City facilities, and to avoid disruption of operations, the City cannot offer these facilities for public use. City staff will make the requested copies or arrange for copying and the requester will be charged in accordance with the City's fee schedule for copies.

The City does charge \$.15 per page for standard black and white copies and \$5.00 per page for standard color copies. Other costs for non-standard size copies, mixed media, photographs or postage/handling may also be applicable. A deposit may be required depending up the volume or number of copies requested.

Failure to Respond to a Public Records Request

If the requester has not received a response from the City within five (5) business days from the date of filing a public records request with the City, the requester is encouraged to contact the public records officer immediately to ensure that the public records request was received by the City.

The requester must claim or review the assembled records within thirty (30) days of notification by the City of the responsive records. If after thirty (30) days of being notified of the availability of the responsive records, the requester fails to inspect the entire set of records or one or more of the installments, the public records officer or designee may consider the records request abandoned, stop searching for the remaining records and close the request.