



Whatcom Transportation Authority

Public Records Requestor's Guide

Whatcom Transportation Authority makes all non-exempt public records available for inspection and copying in compliance with the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56).

How to Make a Public Records Request

1. Contact the Public Records Officer (or alternate) by one of the following methods:

Public Records Officer: Vicki Esser
Alternate: Audra Stiles

Email: RecordsRequests@ridewta.com

Phone: 360-676-7433

Mail: Public Records Officer
Whatcom Transportation Authority
4011 Bakerview Spur
Bellingham, WA 98226

2. Provide your contact information and a description of the records you are requesting.
- Either fill out the form provided and submit it to the Public Records Officer (PRO) or simply provide that information to the PRO using one of the methods above.
 - Specify whether you wish to inspect records or receive copies.

General Information for Requestors

Within five business days of receiving your request, WTA staff will do one of the following:

- a) Make the requested records available for inspection or provide copies.
- b) Acknowledge receipt of the request and provide a reasonable estimate of the time needed to respond.
- c) Seek clarification about the records you are requesting and provide a time estimate based on the current understanding of the request.
- d) Deny the request and provide a specific exemption based on the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56) with an explanation.

Fees:

- \$0.15 per photocopied or printed page
- \$0.10 per scanned page
- \$0.05 for every four electronic files or attachments uploaded to an email, cloud storage service, or other electronic delivery system
- \$0.10 per gigabyte for transmitting records electronically
- Electronic media: actual cost
- For mailed requests: Shipping container - actual cost
Postage - actual cost
- For large requests, if staff are unavailable to produce the copies, an outside vendor may be used and actual cost charged to the requestor.

* Fees totaling less than \$5.00 will be waived.

Customized Service Charge:

A customized service charge may be imposed if WTA estimates that the request would require the use of information technology expertise to prepare data compilations, or provide customized electronic access services when such compilations and customized access services are not used by the agency for other agency purposes. The charge will be calculated to be sufficient to reimburse WTA for the actual cost of providing the service. The customized service charge will not be imposed without prior notification to the requestor and the requestor's agreement to proceed.

Installments

For large requests, records may be provided in installments. If the first installment is not picked up and paid for within 30 days after the requestor is notified that it is available, the request will be considered abandoned and closed.

Abandoned Requests

If the Public Records Officer receives no response from the requestor for 30 days after seeking clarification, requesting information needed to fulfill the request, or notifying the requestor that records are ready for pick up, the request may be considered abandoned and closed.

Inspection

Records will be made available for inspection during normal business hours (Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) at WTA's administration building, 4011 Bakerview Spur, Bellingham, WA. There is no fee for inspection of records. Copies may be requested following inspection.

Appeals

If a request is denied and the requestor wishes to appeal the decision, a request for an appeal may be sent to the General Manager who will submit it to the Whatcom Transportation Authority Records Management Committee for a recommendation. The General Manager will make the final decision on the appeal. A representative from the

Records Management Committee will contact the requestor within five business days with the decision of the General Manager or a time estimate for a decision. If legal consultation is required, the decision process may be lengthened.

No duty to create records

The agency has no obligation to create a new record to fulfill a request. However, at their discretion, staff may choose to do so if it is the most efficient way to fulfill the request. This in no way obligates staff to create records in all cases.

Exemptions

A list of records that are exempt from public disclosure in the Public Records Act sections 42.56.210 through 42.56.480 may be accessed at:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.56&full=true#42.56.210>

A list of records that are exempt from disclosure based on other statutes may be accessed in the Municipal Research Services Center Public Records Act Guide, Appendix C, available at:

<http://mrsc.org/getmedia/796a2402-9ad4-4bde-a221-0d6814ef6edc/Public-Records-Act.pdf.aspx?ext=.pdf>