

4 Essentials of the Public Records Act



You are a steward of the public's records!

Almost every record that you create or use as an employee of King County is subject to the requirements in the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56). This includes everything from paper to digital and everything in between (emails, photos, text messages, videos, databases, etc.). Your public records officer asks you to search for records in response to a request.

Response time is important!

The Public Records Act requires that we respond to public records requesters within 5 business days of receiving the request. This initial request may provide records, deny records, or provide an estimate of the time it will take to fulfill the request. If you receive a request, it's important to inform your public records officer as soon as possible, so that they can respond within the 5-day window. If you don't know who your public records officer is, please ask.



Transparency and Accountability

As a King County employee you have the privilege and responsibility to support government transparency and access by properly managing public records. It is important that if you receive any request for public records (whether in person, by phone or in writing), that you get that request to your public records officer as quickly as possible. The law requires an initial response within 5-days, so time is of the essence. Steep penalties can be assessed for failure to produce records properly and on time.

Resources

The King County Public Records Program can answer any questions you may have related to public disclosure requests or the Public Records Act. Contact them by email at PRA.Requests@kingcounty.gov or by phone at 206-263-2250.

Additionally, every department and agency has a Public Records Officer and other staff with public disclosure expertise. Ask your supervisor for more information about who these people are in your organization.



King County Public Records Program
Email: PRA.Requests@kingcounty.gov
Phone: 206-263-2250
Web: <https://kingcounty.gov/pr>



"We seek a free flow of information... we are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people." ~ President John F. Kennedy