

WAC 292-130-100 Processing of public records requests—General.

(1) Upon receipt of a request, the executive ethics board will assign it a tracking number and log it in.

(2) The public records officer or designee will evaluate the request according to the nature of the request, volume, and availability of requested records.

(3) Following the initial evaluation of the request under this subsection, and within five business days of receipt of the request, the public records officer or designee will do one or more of the following:

(a) Make the records available for inspection or copying including:

(i) If the copies are available on the executive ethics board's website, provide the internet address and link on the website to the specific records requested;

(ii) If copies are requested and payment of a deposit for the copies, if any, is made or other terms of payment are agreed upon, send the copies to the requestor.

(b) Acknowledge receipt of the request and provide a reasonable estimate of when records or an installment of records will be available; or

(c) Acknowledge receipt of the request and ask the requestor to provide clarification for a request that is unclear, and provide, to the greatest extent possible, a reasonable estimate of time the executive ethics board will require to respond to the request if it is not clarified.

(i) Such clarification may be requested and provided by telephone and memorialized in writing;

(ii) If the requestor fails to respond to a request for clarification and the entire request is unclear, the executive ethics board need not respond to it. The executive ethics board will respond to those portions of a request that are clear; or

(d) Deny the request.

(4) If the executive ethics board does not respond in writing within five business days of receipt of the request for disclosure, the requestor should contact the public records officer or designee to determine the reason for the failure to respond.

(5) In the event that the requested records contain information that may affect rights of others and may be exempt from disclosure, the public records officer or designee may, prior to providing the records, give notice to such others whose rights may be affected by the disclosure. Such notice should be given so as to make it possible for those other persons to contact the requestor and ask the requestor to revise the request, or, if necessary, seek an order from a court to prevent or limit the disclosure. The notice to the affected persons will include a copy of the request.

(6) Some records are exempt from disclosure, in whole or in part. If the executive ethics board believes that a record is exempt from disclosure and should be withheld, the public records officer or designee will state the specific exemption and provide a brief written explanation of why the record or a portion of the record is being withheld. If only a portion of a record is exempt from disclosure, but the remainder is not exempt, the public records officer or designee will redact the exempt portions, provide the nonexempt portions, and indicate to the requestor why portions of the record are being redacted.

(7) Consistent with other demands, the executive ethics board will promptly provide space to inspect public records. No member of the public may remove a document from the viewing area or disassemble or alter any document. The requestor must indicate which documents they wish the executive ethics board to copy.

The requestor must claim or review the assembled records within thirty days of the executive ethics board's notification to the requestor that the records are available for inspection or copying. The agency will notify the requestor in writing of this requirement and inform the requestor that they should contact the agency to make arrangements to claim or review the records. If the requestor or a representative of the requestor fails to claim or review the records within the thirty-day period or make other arrangements, the executive ethics board may close the request and refile the assembled records. Other public records requests can be processed ahead of a subsequent request by the same person for the same or almost identical records, which can be processed as a new request.

(8) After inspection is complete, the public records officer or designee will make the requested copies or arrange for copying. Where executive ethics board charges for copies, the requestor must pay for the copies.

(9) When the request is for a large number of records, the public records officer or designee will provide access for inspection and copying in installments, if the public records officer or designee reasonably determine that it would be practical to provide the records in that way. If, within thirty days, the requestor fails to inspect the entire set of records or one or more of the installments, the public records officer or designee may stop searching for the remaining records and close the request.

(10) When the inspection of the requested records is complete and all requested copies are provided, the public records officer or designee will indicate that the executive ethics board has completed a reasonable search for the requested records and made any located non-exempt records available for inspection.

(11) When the requestor either withdraws the request, fails to clarify an entirely unclear request, fails to fulfill their obligations to inspect the records, pay the deposit, pay the required fees for an installment, or make final payment for the requested copies, the public records officer or designee will close the request and, unless the agency has already indicated in previous correspondence that the request would be closed under the above circumstances, indicate to the requestor that the executive ethics board has closed the request.

(12) If, after the executive ethics board has informed the requestor that it has provided all available records, the executive ethics board becomes aware of additional responsive documents existing at the time of the request, it will promptly inform the requestor of the additional documents and provide them on an expedited basis.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 42.52.360. WSR 23-17-038, § 292-130-100, filed 8/9/23, effective 9/9/23; WSR 18-20-107, § 292-130-100, filed 10/2/18, effective 11/2/18; WSR 16-16-075, § 292-130-100, filed 7/29/16, effective 8/29/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 42.52.360 (2)(b). WSR 98-22-072, § 292-130-100, filed 11/3/98, effective 12/4/98.]