

WAC 16-536-115 Response to public records requests. (1) The public records officer shall respond to public records requests within five business days by:

(a) Making the records available for inspection or copying;
(b) Providing a link or address for a record available on the internet under RCW 42.56.520;
(c) Acknowledging receipt of the request and providing a reasonable estimate of the time the commission will require to respond to the request;

(d) Sending the copies to the requestor if copies are requested and payment of a deposit for the copies is made or terms of payment have been agreed upon; or

(e) Denying the public records request. Responses refusing in whole or in part the inspection of a public record shall include a statement of the specific exemption authorizing withholding of the record, or any part of the record, and a brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the record withheld or to any redactions in records produced.

(2) Additional time to respond to the request may be based upon the need to:

(a) Clarify the intent of the request;
(b) Locate and assemble the information requested;
(c) Notify persons or agencies affected by the request; or
(d) Determine whether any of the information requested is exempt from disclosure and that a denial should be made as to all or part of the request.

(3) In acknowledging receipt of a public records request that is unclear, the public records officer may ask the requestor to clarify what records the requestor is seeking. The public records officer is not obligated to provide further response if the requestor fails to clarify the request.

(4) In the event the requested records name a specific person or pertain to a specific person and may be exempt from disclosure, the commission may, prior to providing the records, give notice to others whose rights may be affected by the disclosure. Sufficient notice will be given to allow affected persons to 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.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 15.65.047, 42.56.040 and chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 21-15-117, § 16-536-115, filed 7/21/21, effective 8/21/21.]