

Washington Township, Northampton County Right-to-Know Law Policy

Washington Township, Northampton County adopts this policy pursuant to Section 504(a) of the Right-to-Know Law, 65 P.S. §§ 67.101-67.3104. Washington Township has made this policy available to the public at its office(s) and on its public website along with the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records Uniform Request Form.

1. Township Website

The Township maintains a public website at <https://www.washington-township.com>. The Township maintains the following information on its public website: (1) contact information for the open-records officer; (2) contact information for the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records or other applicable appeals officer; (3) the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records' Standard Right-to-Know Request Form; (4) a copy of this Policy; and (5) any other regulations, policies and procedures related to Right-to-Know Law requests.

2. Open Records Officer

The Township generally designates the Open Records Officer and Alternate Open Records Officer at its annual reorganization meeting. The Township reserves the right to remove, substitute, replace, or fill a vacancy in the position of Open Records Officer and Alternate Open Records Officer at any public meeting of the Township. The identity of the Township's Open Records Officer and Alternate Open Records Officer is published on its public website.

3. General

Public records shall be available for inspection, retrieval, and duplication at the Township office during normal business hours as published on the Township's public website, with the exception of township-designated holidays.

4. Requests

- A. Requests shall be made in writing to the Township's Open Records Officer on the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records' Standard Right-to-Know Request Form. Anonymous or verbal requests will not be considered.
- B. If a requester chooses not to use the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records' Standard Right-to-Know Request Form, the request will be considered an informal request not subject to the Right-to-Know Law, which means the requester cannot pursue the relief and remedies provided for in the Right-to-Know Law.

5. Fees

- A. Paper copies shall be \$0.25 per page per side for black and white copies up to the first 1,000 pages and \$0.20 beyond 1,000 pages and \$.50 for color copies. The certification of

a record is \$5 per record. Specialized documents, including but not limited to blueprints, color copies, and nonstandard-sized documents, shall be charged the actual cost of production. If mailing is requested, the cost of postage will be charged. All fees must be paid before documents are released. Prepayment is required if the total fees are estimated to exceed \$100.

- B. If a statute other than the Right-to-Know Law governs the amount that may be charged for a certain type of record, the other statute (not the Right-to-Know Law) governs the amount that may be charged for those records. By way of example, without limitation, police departments may charge up to \$15 for a copy of a vehicle accident report, and police departments may charge fees for other records subject to the Criminal History Record Information Act. The Township police department maintains a separate fee schedule for any records requested from the police department.

6. Response

- A. All applicable fees shall be paid in order to receive access to the record(s) requested.
- B. The Township generally has 5 business days to respond to a request for records under the Right-to-Know Law.
- C. The Township is permitted to exercise a 30-day extension of time following the initial five business day response period for any of the reasons set forth in the Right-to-Know Law. If the Township exercises the 30-day extension of time, the Township will inform the requester in writing as required by the Right-to-Know Law.
- D. The requester may agree, in writing, to extend the time for response beyond the 30-day extension of time period.
- E. The Township will issue a written response to a request subject to the Right-to-Know Law. The response will either grant the request, partially grant and partially deny the request, or deny the request in its entirety. Should the Township fail to issue a response within the applicable response period, the request is deemed denied.
- F. The Township may grant a request for records by (i) granting access to inspect agency records during the Township's regular business hours; (ii) sending copies of the records to the requester as long as applicable fees are paid; or (iii) by notifying the requester that the records are available on the Township's website or any other publicly accessible electronic website or electronic database.
- G. If the Township denies the request, the requester will receive a letter stating (i) a description of the record requested or restating the requester's request; (ii) the specific reasons for the denial, including a citation of supporting legal authority; (iii) contact information for the Township's Open Records Officer; (iv) the date of the response; and (v) the procedure to appeal the denial.

7. Appeals Process

- A. If a written request is denied or deemed denied by the Township, the requester may file an appeal in writing to the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records, 555 Walnut Street, Suite 605, Harrisburg, PA 17101-1925 or via fax to 717-425-5343.
- B. A denial of a request for information about law enforcement matters, including a denial by the Township police department, may be appealed to the District Attorney of Northampton County, 669 Washington Street, Easton, PA 18042, to the attention of Assistant District Attorney Catherine Kollet or the successor appeals officer identified on the District Attorney of Northampton County's public website.
- C. All appeals must be made in writing and filed with the Pennsylvania Office of Open Records or District Attorney of Northampton County within fifteen (15) business days of the mailing date of the denial or the date of the deemed denial.
- D. All appeals must include reasons why the record is a public record, address the reasons for denial that the Township stated in its denial letter, and the appeal must be accompanied by a copy of the original request and the denial letter.
- E. Requesters may visit the OOR's website at www.openrecords.pa.gov for additional information on filing an appeal.

8. Additional Information

- A. The Township may amend this Policy at any time at any public meeting of the Board of Supervisors.
- B. The Township may also post additional information on the Township's public website about the procedure or process for making a request subject to the Right-to-Know Law which is not contained in this policy. Any additional information on the Township's public website which is posted as a result of official action of the Township Board of Supervisors has the same force and affect as the procedures and processes set forth in this policy.
- C. Requesters are required to check the public website of the Township, Pennsylvania Office of Open Records, and District Attorney of Northampton County to confirm the identity and contact information for the Open Records Officer and/or Appeals Officer.

Effective Date: 09/30/2026