

TAZEWELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION GUIDELINES

I. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are established to implement the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (Supp. to Ill. Rev. Statutes 1983, Ch. 116, Par. 201 et seq.). The purpose of these guidelines is to support the policy of providing public access to the public records in the possession of this Department while, at the same time, protecting legitimate privacy interests and maintaining administrative efficiency.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Terms used in these guidelines shall have the same meaning as in the Freedom of Information Act.
- B. "FOIA" means the Freedom of Information Act.
- C. "Freedom of Information Officer" means the Environmental Health Director or the Business Operations Director.
- D. "Department" means the Tazewell County Health Department.
- E. "Requestor" means a person who submits a request for public records in accordance with these guidelines.

III. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING PUBLIC RECORDS

A. Person to Whom Requests are Submitted

Requests for public records shall be submitted to the Freedom of Information Officer(s) to this Department.

Requests shall be submitted to the following:

Environmental Related
Mrs. Melissa Goetze, BS
Director of Environmental Health
Tazewell County Health Dept.
21306 Illinois Route 9
Tremont, IL 61568-9252
ATTN: FOIA REQUEST

or

General Requests
Mrs. Janet S. Johnson, BS
Director of Business Operations
Tazewell County Health Dept.
21306 Illinois Route 9
Tremont, IL 61568-9252
ATTN: FOIA REQUEST

309-929-0286
309-925-4100 (fax)
mgoetze@tchd.net

309-929-0222
309-925-4381 (fax)
jjohnson@tchd.net

- B. Form and Content of Requests
 - 1. Requests must be made in accordance with the FOIA. Such request may be submitted on FOIA request forms provided by the Department (See Appendix A to these guidelines).
 - 2. The requestor shall provide the following information in a request for public records:
 - a. The Requestor's full name, address, phone number, fax number and email address to provide correspondence;
 - b. A description of the public records sought, being as specific as possible, including dates where applicable;
 - c. Whether a request is for inspection of public records, copies of public records, or both.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

- A. Time for Department Response
 - 1. The Department shall respond to a request for public records within 5 working days after the receipt of such request.
 - 2. The Department may give written/electronic notice of an extension of time to respond, which does not exceed an additional 5 working days. Such an extension is allowable if written notice is provided within the original 5 working days time limit for reasons provided in Section 3 (d) of the FOIA. Such notice of extension shall state the reasons why the extension is necessary and the date by which the records will be made available, or denial will be forthcoming.
- B. Types of Department Responses
 - 1. The Department shall respond in one of three ways:
 - (a) Approve the request;
 - (b) Approve in part and deny in part;
 - (c) Deny the request.
 - 2. Upon approval of a request for public records, the Department may either make available the materials, give notice that the materials shall be made available upon payment of allowable costs, or give notice of the time and place for inspection of records.
 - 3. A denial of a request for public records shall be made in writing. It shall state the reasons for the denial in accordance with either Section 3(f) or Section 7 of the FOIA and the names and titles of individuals responsible for the decision. It shall also give notice of the requestor's right to appeal to the Director of Health.
 - 4. Categorical requests creating an undue burden upon the Department shall be denied only after extending to the requestor an opportunity to confer in an attempt to reduce the request to manageable proportions in accordance with Section 3(f).
 - 5. Failure to respond to a written request within 5 working days will be considered by the requestor a denial of the request.

V. PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL OF A DENIAL

A. Appeal of a Denial

1. A requestor whose request has been denied by the Freedom of Information Officer(s) may appeal the denial to the Director of Health. The notice of appeal shall be made in writing and sent to:

Mrs. Amy Fox, BS
Health Department Administrator
Tazewell County Health Department
21306 Illinois Route 9
Tremont, IL 61568-9252
ATTN: FOIA APPEAL
afox@tchd.net

2. The notice of appeal shall include a copy of the original request, a copy of the denial received by the requestor, and a statement of the reasons why the appeal should be granted.

B. Director of Health's Response to Appeal

The Director of Health shall respond to an appeal within 5 working days after receiving notice thereof. The Director of Health shall either affirm the denial or provide access to the requested public records.

C. Appeal to State Public Access Counselor's Office

In the event that a requestor feels a final denial decision is unjust, they may contact the:

Public Access Bureau
500 S. 2nd Street
Springfield, IL 62706
217-558-0486
publicaccess@atg.state.il.us

VI. PROCEDURES FOR PROVIDING PUBLIC RECORDS TO REQUESTORS

A. Inspection of Records at the Tazewell County Health Department

1. Unless otherwise agreed, the inspection of records shall take place at the office of the Freedom of Information Office during normal working hours.
2. Documents which the requestor wishes to have copies shall be segregated during the course of the inspection. Generally, all copying shall be done by Department employees.
3. An employee of the Department may be present throughout the inspection. A requestor may be prohibited from bringing bags, briefcases, or other containers into the inspection room.

- B. Copies of Public Records
1. Copies of public records shall be provided to the requestor only upon payment of any charges which are due.
 2. Charges for copies of public records shall be assessed in accordance with the "Fee Schedule for Duplication of Public Records" attached as Appendix B to these guidelines.
 3. Charges may be waived or reduced in any case where the Freedom of Information Officer determines that the waiver serves the public interest.

C. General Materials Available from the Freedom of Information Officer

The Freedom of Information Officer shall make available to the public at no charge the following materials:

1. A brief description of the organizational structure and budget of the Department.
2. A list of types and categories of public records maintained by the Department (See Appendix I of these guidelines).
3. A copy of these Guidelines.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Request for Public Records – Forms
Appendix B	Fee Schedule for Duplication and Certification of Public Records
Appendix C	Approval of Request for Public Records – Form
Appendix D	Partial Approval of Request for Public Records – Form
Appendix E	Denial of Request for Public Records – Form
Appendix F	Deferral of Response to request for Public Records - Form
Appendix G	Director of Health's Response to Appeal – Form
Appendix H	Record of Service of FOIA Follow-up – Form
Appendix I	Description of the Department
Appendix J	List of Records

