

**SOUTHWEST REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY**

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to comply with the Ohio Public Records Act and Section 149.43, Ohio Revised Code, which provides prompt inspection of public records and upon request, copies of public records within a reasonable amount of time.

Policy: A public office is basically an entity that performs a public service and is supported by public funds. The Southwest Regional Communications Council of Governments (“COG”) recognizes that most records generated by and for the operation of the COG are public documents and include, but are not limited to, the following: COG minutes, reports, receipts, expenditures, salaries, position descriptions, contracts and policy statements. These public records are open to public review.

The public record is a record held by a public office that is stored on a fixed medium, created, received, or sent under jurisdiction of a public office and which documents the activities of the office. Public record documents include, but are not limited to, paper, tapes and e-mails.

Exceptions to the public records disclosure request include:

1. Any provision of Ohio or Federal law that protects records from the public.
2. Medical records related to a consumer’s medical condition generated and maintained in the process of medical treatment.
3. Trial preparation records that contain information that was specifically compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or in defense of, litigation. Trial preparation records are not subject to public disclosure until the case and any appeals have concluded.
4. Demographic information including address, social security number, phone numbers.

Procedure: Requests to review public records can be made to the Treasurer of the COG. If the requested documents are easily accessed and compiled, the requester can inspect the records within a reasonable period of time. If the requested records are extensive, the Treasurer will respond to the request without delay and with reasonable speed, which is determined on the nature of the request. On-site review of public records is made in the presence of the Treasurer or designee during normal business hours.

Copies of public records may be requested and will be copied by the Treasurer or designee at a cost to the requester of five cents (.05) per page. The COG may not charge for employee time in gathering and reviewing the records. Full payment must be received before copies are given to the requester.

Mail requests to review public records are made to the Treasurer, who is to respond to the request within a reasonable time, stating the cost of the copies available and any mailing or delivery costs. Prepayment of copying and delivery costs is required. Mail or delivery of requested copies is to be made within a reasonable time after receipt or full payment for copying and delivery. The requester may obtain the public records by e-mail upon supplying an e-mail address in which to submit the documents requested. The records will be sent by e-mail within a reasonable time.

The requester does not need to identify him or herself or explain intended use of any requested public document. The Treasurer cannot deny access due to a requester’s refusal to answer any of the former questions.