

31. PUBLIC RECORDS AND INFORMATION

POLICY

It is the policy of Scott County to assure open public access to all records of the County to the extent permitted by the Iowa State Open Records Act and Federal Freedom of Information Acts. Further it is the policy to fairly recover costs for the retrieval of said records and electronic data.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all County offices and departments in a position to dispense County collected data.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Open records will be available for public inspection during customary office hours of 8:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. Monday through Friday (except holidays). The County will make every effort to provide the public with access to public records in a prompt and efficient manner.

Scott County shall hereby establish and charge appropriate fees for public examination and copying of public records. The Assistant County Administrator is the person designated to implement the requirements and procedures related to requests for public records. This policy is not intended to preclude routine verbal requests of documents by the public or media to staff.

All requests (written or oral) for public records should be filled in compliance with state law (i.e. within 10 working days). Immediate access to records may be affected by a good faith effort to: verify the scope of the records' request; locate the specific records requested; and determine whether any of the records, or information contained therein, is confidential in nature. If the department has a concern about whether the record requested may be considered confidential under state law, the lawful custodian should consult with the County Attorney's office. Confidential records include but are not limited to medical records, employee related files, documents concerning litigation or claims, and names or addresses of complainants. Confidential records may be withheld, and confidential information within an otherwise open record may be redacted prior to a record's release for public

examination and copying. If a confidential record is withheld from examination and copying, or confidential information within an otherwise open record is redacted, the County will identify the document(s) and cite the application provision of law which supports the decision to withhold the confidential information from public examination.

Unless a department has a specific policy or fee schedule the following shall apply:

1. Photo copies: \$.25 Per page, after the first 10 pages, plus postage if being mailed.

2. If staff time is required in excess of 30 minutes for the time spent supervising the public examination or to retrieve the requested records, the hourly rate calculated annually by the Budget Manager shall be used. If the retrieval requires an extensive search or specially programmed computer time the party requesting the documents will be notified in advance that the anticipated costs exceed twenty five dollars and require the individual to make a deposit.

Departments responsible for responding to the request, with the assistance of Information Technology when applicable, are responsible for calculating appropriate charges using these guidelines.