

## **Public Records Request**

The Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Board of Putnam County maintains records in a manner so that they are readily available for inspection and copying as required by Ohio's Public Record's Act (ORC§149.43).

The Ohio Revised Code §149.43 defines records as including the following: Any document – paper, electronic (including, but not limited to, e-mail), or other format – that is created or received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of a public office that documents the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office. All records of the Mental Health and Recovery Services Board are public unless they are specifically exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Revised Code.

### **Policy:**

#### Records Request

Although no specific language is required to make a request, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Board of Putnam County to identify, retrieve, and review the records. If it is not clear what records are being sought, the requester will be contacted for clarification, and may be assisted in revising the request by being informed of the manner in which the records are kept by the Board.

The requester does not have to put a records request in writing, and does not have to provide his or her identity or the intended use of the requested public record.

Public records shall be available for inspection during regular business hours, with the exception of holidays. Public records shall be made available for inspection promptly. Copies of public records shall be made available within a reasonable period of time. "Prompt" and "reasonable" take into account the volume of records requested; the proximity of the location where the records are stored; and the necessity for any legal review of the records requested.

Each request should be evaluated for an estimated length of time required to gather the records. Routine requests for records should be satisfied immediately if feasible to do so. Routine requests include, but are not limited to, meeting minutes, budgets, salary information, forms and applications, personnel rosters, etc. If the request is not able to be filled immediately, Board staff shall let the requester know when he or she can pick up the requested materials.

All requests for public records shall either be satisfied or be acknowledged in writing by the Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Board of Putnam County within three business days following the office's receipt of the request. If a request is deemed significantly beyond "routine", such as seeking a voluminous number of copies, requiring an extensive research of archived materials or requiring a legal opinion; the acknowledgement must include the following:

- An estimated number of business days it will take to satisfy the request.
- An estimated cost if copies are requested.
- Any items within the request that may be exempt from disclosure.

### **Denials:**

Any denial of public records requested must include an explanation, including legal authority. If portions of a record are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions are to be revised and the rest released. If there are revisions, each revision must be accompanied by a supporting explanation, including legal authority.

### **Costs for Public Records:**

Individuals seeking copies of public records from the Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Board of Putnam County will only be charged for the actual cost of copies, disks, and postage and mailing supplies. Staff time used for gathering, reviewing or copying the records is not considered part of the cost that is charged to the requester.

The Mental Health, Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Board of Putnam County will not charge for individual records requests for which calculated charges total less than \$10. Requests for which calculated charges are \$10 or more will be charged to the requester. Charges for copying and mailing public records shall be calculated as follows.

- The charge for paper copies shall be \$0.05 per page.
- The charge for downloaded computer files to a CD or DVD is \$1 per disc.
- There is no charge for e-mailed documents.
- For documents that are requested to be mailed. The requester will be charged the actual cost of the postage and mailing supplies.

### **E-mail records:**

Documents in electronic mail format are records as defined by the Ohio Revised Code when their content relates to the business of the office. E-mail is to be treated in the same fashion as records in other formats and should follow the same retention schedules.

Records in private e-mail accounts used to conduct public business are subject to disclosure, and all employees or representatives of this office are instructed to retain their e-mails that relate to public business and to copy them to their business e-mail accounts and/or to the office's Director of Information Services.

The Director of Information Services shall treat the e-mails from private accounts as records of the public office, filing them in the appropriate way, retaining them per established schedules and making them available for inspection and copying in accordance with the Public Records Act.