

## 1.3. Public Records

Policy Effective Date: 5/1/2018



The Pickaway County District Public Library shall comply with Ohio Revised Code 149.43, Ohio's Public Records Law. Ohio's Public Records Law generally provides that upon request all public records responsive to the request, and not specifically excluded from disclosure, shall be promptly prepared and made available for inspection to any person at all reasonable times during regular business hours. If it is found that this policy conflicts with any federal, state or local law, the law shall take precedence.

### I. Public Records

- a. In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code and applicable judicial decisions, records are defined as any item that:
  - i. contains information stored on a fixed medium (such as paper, electronic – including but not limited to email – and other formats) and;
  - ii. is created or received by, or sent under the jurisdiction of a public office and;
  - iii. documents the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the office.
- b. In order to facilitate broader access of such records, the library shall maintain its records in such a manner that they can be made available within a reasonable time in accordance with this policy.

### II. Records Requests

- a. Individuals requesting access to inspect public records and/or receive copies of public records may be asked to voluntarily submit a written request explaining or identifying the records they wish to inspect and/or receive copies of.
  - i. In no event shall an individual be denied access to inspect and/or obtain copies of public records based on their refusal to complete a written request.
- b. Copies of records shall be made available at cost.

### III. Mailed Record Requests

- a. Upon receiving a written request for copies of a public record made in accordance with section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code via the United States Postal Service, the library shall promptly respond to the request. The library shall, by any means practical, contact the requestor and advise them that advance payment is required prior to providing copies of public records via the United States Mail System, and in addition, the fee shall also include the cost of postage and the envelope.
  - i. When practical, the library may forward copied records by any other means reasonably acceptable to the requestor.

### IV. Ambiguous or Overly Broad Request for Public Records

- a. If a requestor makes an ambiguous or overly broad request or has difficulty in making a request for copies or inspection of public records such that the library cannot reasonably identify what public records are being requested, the library may deny the request, but shall provide the requestor with an opportunity to revise the request by informing the requestor of the manner in which records are maintained by the library and accessed.

### V. Denial of Records Request

- a. If a request is ultimately denied, in part or whole, the library shall provide the requestor with an explanation, including legal authority, setting forth why the request was denied. If portions of a record are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions will be redacted and the rest released.

### VI. Exempted and/or Excluded Information

- a. Records which release is prohibited or exempted by either State or Federal Law shall not be subject to public inspection. The following represents a partial list of records maintained by the library that may not be inspected or copied:
  - i. Information pertaining to medical treatment
  - ii. Employee's residential and familial information
  - iii. Patron information, which means personally identifiable information about an individual who has used any library service or borrowed any library materials

### VII. Custodian of Records

- a. The Pickaway County District Public Library designates the Fiscal Officer of the library to be the custodian of the records.

### VIII. Policy Execution

- a. The director shall take steps to educate all library employees of this policy and the director is authorized and directed to implement procedures in furtherance of this policy