



**COLUMBIA COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
507 W CAMERON ST. DAYTON, WA 99328**

SUBJECT: PUBLIC RECORDS MODEL RULES  
SECTION: 9-RECORD KEEPING AND MISCELLANEOUS

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EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/20/2023  
APPROVED BY: CCPT BOARD                      REPLACES ADOPTED 06/16/16 VERSION  
APPROVAL DATE: 4/20/2023

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**Columbia County Public Transportation Public Records Model Rules Policy**  
April 2023

Columbia County Public Transportation (CCPTA) is subject to the Public Records Act (PRA) RCW 42.56, as provided in RCW 48.62.101. Under the PRA, CCPTA is required to make identifiable, non-exempt public records available for inspection and copying upon request and to publish procedures to inform the public how to access public records will be accomplished. Pursuant to these requirements, the following procedure is responding to public records requests are established.

The purpose of these rules is to provide the public access to information concerning the conduct of CCPTA’s activities, protect public records from damage or disorganization, and to establish a process for obtaining public records, subject to any legal exemptions. In carrying out its responsibilities under the PRA, CCPTA will be guided by the provisions of the PRA and the Washington Administrative Code, Chapter 44-14-010 through 44-14-080, Public Records Act-Model Rules. These rules are based upon the provisions of the PRA RCW 42.17/RCW 42.56

## Section 1. Agency Descriptions, Contact Information, Public Records Officer

- a. CCPTA is a provider of public transportation and public rideshare services within Columbia County and Walla Walla Valley area. CCPTA's central office is located at 507 W. Cameron St, Dayton, Washington 99328.
- b. Any person wishing to request access to public records of CCPTA, or seeking assistance in making such a request, should contact the Public Records Officer (PRO) of CCPTA.

### Public Records Officer:

Megan Schmidt  
Columbia County Public Transportation Authority  
507 W Cameron St.  
Dayton, WA 99328  
Phone (509) 382-1647 Ext. 001  
Fax (509) 382-3004  
[publicrecordsrequest@ccptransit.org](mailto:publicrecordsrequest@ccptransit.org)  
[www.ccptransit.org](http://www.ccptransit.org)

## Section 2. Availability of Public Records

- a. Hours for inspection of records: Public records are available for inspection and copying at the CCPTA office 9AM-5PM Monday through Friday excluding legal holidays. CCPTA staff and the requestor may make mutually agreeable arrangements for times of inspection and copying.
- b. Place of Inspection: Records will be made available for inspections at CCPTA's main office. A requestor shall not take original records from the CCPTA office without written permission of the Public Records Officer.
- c. Electronic Records: To the extent practical, CCPTA will store, maintain and make its records available electronically. For those seeking records in electronic format, CCPTA may provide access to public records by providing links to the website containing an electronic copy of the record, provide



records on disc or thumb drive, or transmit the responsive record via email. The Public Records Officer will work with the requestor to determine the most appropriate method for providing electronic copies of the requested records. This includes requested materials such as video surveillance.

- d. Records Index: Due to the burdensome nature of maintaining a complete index of records, and CCPTA being a small agency with limited staff, the Public Records Officer will index and maintain the following general administrative records at the CCPTA office to make them available for public inspection and copying:
- Policies and Procedures adopted by the CCPTA Board
  - Interlocal Agreements
  - Minutes of regular meetings of the Board
  - Public contracts
  - Financial and Accountability Audits

The Public Records Officer will coordinate responses to public records requests with appropriate staff, and shall be made available for public inspection electronically, or in person at the CCPTA office in accordance with the PRA.

- e. Retention of Records: CCPTA is not required to retain all public records. The Secretary of State's Local Records Committee approves a general retention schedule for local agency records that is common to most agencies (C.O.R.E). CCPTA follows this retention schedule, which can be found here [www.secstate.wa.gov/archives/gs.aspx](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/archives/gs.aspx)

### **Section 3. Making a Request for Public Records**

- a. Any person wishing to inspect or copy public records of CCPTA should make the request in writing on CCPTA's request form, by letter, fax, or email addressed to the Public Records Officer. Please include the following information
- Name of requestor
  - Address of requestor
  - Contact information, including phone number and email address

- Identification of the requested records adequate for the Public Records Officer to locate the records
  - The date and time of day of the request
- b. Prioritization of records: The Public Records Officer may ask a requestor to prioritize the records they are requesting so that the most important records may be provided first. A requestor is not required to prioritize a request.
- c. Copies: If the requestor wishes to have copies of the records instead of simply inspecting them, they should indicate and make arrangements to pay for the copies or make a deposit. Details of copy pricing are further discussed in Section 5 of the CCPTA Public Records Model Rules.
- d. Oral Requests: The Public Records Officer may accept requests for public records that contain the above information by telephone or in person. If an oral request is made, the Public Records Officer will confirm receipt of the information and the substance of the request in writing by filling out the recommended request form. Requests made directly to staff other than the Public Records Officer shall be delivered to the Public Records Officer for coordinated processing.

#### **Section 4. Processing of Public Records Requests**

- a. Providing Fullest Assistance: CCPTA will provide full access to fitting public records, protect records from damage or disorganization, prevent excessive interference with other essential functions of the agency, provide fullest assistance to requestors, and provide timeliest possible action on public records requests. The Public Records Officer or designee will process requests in the order allowing the most requests to be processed in the most efficient manner.
- b. Acknowledging Receipt of request: Within five (5) business days of receipt of the request, the Public Records Officer will do one or more of the following:



- Acknowledge that the request has been received and provide a reasonable estimate of when records will be available to the requestor
  - Make the record(s) available for inspection or copying
  - If copies are requested and payment of a deposit for the copies, if any, are made or terms of payment are agreed upon, send the copies to the requestor.
  - If the request is unclear or does not sufficiently identify the requested records, request clarification from the requestor. Such clarification may be requested and provided by telephone, email, or letter
  - Deny the request following the PRA model rules
- c. Reasonable estimate of time to fully respond: If unable to prove the documents requested within five business days, the Public Records Officer must provide a reasonable estimate of the time it will take to fully respond to the request. Additional time may be needed to clarify the scope of the request, locate and assemble the records, redact confidential information, prepare a withholding index, notify third parties affected by the request and/or consult with the Board about whether the records are exempt from disclosure.
- d. Consequences of Failure to Respond: If CCPTA does not respond in writing within five business days of the receipt of the request for disclosure, the requestor should consider contacting the PRO to determine the reasons for the failure to respond.
- e. Consequences of failure to clarify a request: If the requestor does not respond to CCPTA's request for clarification within 30 days of CCPTA's request, the Public Records Officer may consider the request abandoned, send a letter closing the response to the requestor, and re-file the records.
- f. Searching for records: CCPTA must conduct an objectively reasonable search for responsive records. The Public Records Officer will determine

where responsive records are likely to be located and coordinate with staff, as needed, to assemble the records. After the records are located, the Public Records Officer should take reasonable steps to narrow down the number of records assembled to those that are responsive. The Public Records Officer is allowed to provide arguably, but not clearly, responsive records to allow the requestor to select the ones they want, particularly if the requestor is unable or unwilling to help narrow the scope of the records being sought.

- If, after the Public Records Officer has informed the requestor that CCPTA has provided all available records, CCPTA becomes aware of additional responsive documents that existed on the date of the request, the Public Records Officer will promptly inform the requestor of the additional documents and provide them on an expedited basis.

g. Inspection of records: To the extent possible due to other demands, the Public Records Officer shall promptly provide space to inspect public records at the CCPTA office. No member of the public may remove a document from the viewing area or disassemble or alter any document. The requestor shall indicate which documents they wish the agency to copy.

- If the requestor or a representative of the requestor fails to claim or review the records or make other arrangements within the thirty-day period, the Public Records Officer may close the request and re-file the assembled records. Other public records requests can be processed before a subsequent request by the same person for the same or almost identical records, which will be processed as a new request.

h. Providing records in installments: When the request is for a large number of records, the Public Records Officer will provide access for inspection and copying in installments if they reasonably determine that it would be practical to provide the records in that way. If the requestor fails to inspect the entire set of records or one or more of the installments within thirty



days, the Public Records Officer may stop searching for the remaining records and close the request.

- i. Completion of inspection: When the inspection of the requested records is complete, and all requested copies are provided, the Public Records Officer will indicate that CCPTA has completed a diligent search for the requested records and made any located non-exempt records available for inspection.
- j. Closing withdrawn or abandoned requests: If the requestor withdraws the request, fails to fulfill their obligations to inspect the records, or fails to pay the deposit or final payment for the requested copies, the Public Records Officer will close the request and indicate to the requestor that CCPTA has closed the request. If the requested records are not picked up within thirty days, the request will be considered abandoned and closed. The Public Records Officer will document closure of the request and the conditions that led to closure.
- k. Exemptions: CCPTA is not required to permit public inspection and copying of records for which public disclosure of the record is prohibited, restricted, or limited by state or federal statute or regulation. CCPTA complies with the Public Records Act requirement (RCW 42.56.070). The list of these exemptions can be found on CCPTA's website at this link:

### **Section 5: Costs of providing copies of public records**

There is no fee for inspecting public records at CCPT's physical office. A requestor may obtain standard non-colored photocopies or non-exempt records for fifteen cents per page. Color copies are not available.

- **Cost of Records Via Email**: The cost of non-exempt records sent via email to the requestor is at the Public Records Officer's discretion, and will be determined by the amount of records, and whether they need to be scanned prior to emailing. The cost of emailed records cannot exceed four cents per copy.

- **Cost of Electronic Records:** If the requestor wishes to receive the records electronically (i.e. CD/DVD, flash drives), the charged amount will be for the actual cost of the item records are downloaded onto, and ten cents per gigabyte of downloaded records.
- **Cost of Mailing:** CCPTA will charge actual costs of mailing records, including the cost of the items shipped, and shipping container.

Payment may be made by cash, check, or debit/credit card to Columbia County Public Transportation Authority. The Public Records Officer or designee may require a deposit of up to 10% of the estimated cost of copying all the selected records by the requestor. The Public Records Officer may also require payment of the remainder of the copying costs before providing all the records or payment of the cost of copying in installments before providing that installment. Sales tax will not apply to the cost of public records requests.

## **Section 6. Denials of Requests for Public Records**

- Petition for internal administrative review of denial of access:** Any person who objects to the initial denial or partial denial of a records request may petition in writing (including by email) to the Public Records Officer for a review of that decision. The petition shall include a copy of, or reasonably identify, the written statement by the Public Records Officer or designee denying the request.
- Consideration of petition for review:** The Public Records Officer shall promptly provide the petition and any other relevant information to the Public Records Officer's supervisor, or the CCPTA Board to conduct the review. That person(s) will promptly consider the petition and either affirm or reverse the denial within two business days following CCPTA'S receipt of the petition, or within such other time to which CCPTA and the requestor mutually agree.
- Judicial Review:** Any person may obtain court review of denials of public records requests pursuant to RCW 47.17.340/42.56.550 at the conclusion



of two business days after the denial regardless of any internal administrative appeal.


**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Columbia County Public Transportation, State of Washington, on this 20<sup>th</sup> day of April 2023.

Approved by,

  
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**Zac Weatherford, Chairman**

04/20/2023  
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Date

Attested by,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**David Ocampo, General Manager**

4-20-23  
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Date