

Public Records Request Policy

Purpose

To comply with Washington State RCW 42.56 Public Records, commonly known as the Public Records Act, Ritzville Library District #2 (RLD2) shall have procedures and guidelines for requests for public records.

Requests for Public Records

Any public record may be obtained by members of the public by using the following procedures:

- Completion of a **Request to Inspect Public Records** form. The request form is available at the Ritzville Public Library, 302 W. Main Ave., Ritzville, WA 99169, or the library website. All requests either for inspection or for copies of public records must be in writing addressed to the Public Records Officer and may be delivered in person to the Ritzville Public Library, by mail, or e-mail to info@ritzvillelibrary.com.
- The request includes the following information:
 - The name and address of the requester;
 - The date of the request;
 - A detailed description of the public record being requested;
 - Whether the requester wants copies, or wants to inspect the requested records;
 - The address where copies are to be mailed, if copies are requested (or an email address to mail scanned versions);
 - A statement regarding whether the records are being requested for commercial purposes; and
 - Signature of the requester.

Library Response to Records Request

The Library will respond to all Public Records Act requests within five (5) business days, in compliance with RCW 42.56.070. A Library response to the Requester may include:

- a. Notifying the requester that the documents are available for inspection or copying;
- b. Acknowledging the request in writing and providing a reasonable estimate of the time the Library will require to respond to the request;
- c. Seeking clarification from the Requester;
- d. Identifying the physical location or internet site where the documents are available to the public; or
- e. Denying the records request in accordance with this Policy (see Exemptions section below).

Inspection Location

RLD2's public records are available for inspection from 11:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday through Friday by appointment (excluding legal holidays or upon official closure of the facility) only at the Ritzville Public Library, 302 W. Main Ave., Ritzville, WA 99169

Installments

When a records request is for a large volume of records, the Library may elect to provide records on an installment basis. If a Requester does not contact the Public Records Officer within 15

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days to arrange for the review of the first installment, the Library may deem the request abandoned and stop fulfilling the remainder of the request.

Exemptions

Documents or portions of documents may be withheld from disclosure under Washington law. These exemptions from disclosure include:

- **Library Records of Individual Users**
Any library record subject to RCW 42.56.310, as interpreted by the Library's Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records and Patron Files, is exempt from disclosure and will not be released under the Public Records Act.
- **Public Records Act Exemptions**
The Public Records Act exempts several categories of documents and records from disclosure under RCW 42.56.210 *et seq.* A copy of RCW 42.56.210 is available at: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=42.56>. Documents falling into any of these categories may be withheld from disclosure under the Public Records Act.
- **Other Exemptions**
In addition to the exemptions provided under the Public Records Act, Washington provides a number of additional exemptions that are not listed in the Public Records Act. A non-exclusive list of these exemptions is available at: <http://mrsc.org/getmedia/796a2402-9ad4-4bde-a221-0d6814ef6edc/pr14.pdf.aspx#page=78>. Documents falling into any exemption recognized by Washington statute, or otherwise under local, state or federal law, may be withheld under the Public Records Act.

Third Party Rights

If a public record contains personal information that identifies any individual or organization other than the subject of the requested public record, RLD2 may, at its discretion, notify that individual or organization to allow the third party to seek relief pursuant to RCW 42.56.540. The District may take into account any such third-party notification, including the time necessary for any request for injunction or other relief under RCW 42.56.540 to be resolved, in providing an estimate for when the records will be available. Nothing in this Policy is intended to create any third-party right to notice of Public Records Act requests.

Denials of requests

Any person objecting to any form of denial of a records request may petition for review of such decision by submitting in writing a petition to the Library Board of Trustees, including a copy or reasonably identifying the statement of the Public Records Officer denying the records request. The Board of Trustees shall review the petition and respond in writing. Upon review by the Board of Trustees, should the record further be considered exempt in accordance with Section 8 of this Policy, the request shall be considered concluded.

Charges

In compliance with RCW 42.56.120, no fee is charged for inspection of documents. Fees for paper or electronic copies will be charged in accordance with the following schedule:

- Black-and-white copies of documents will be provided at a charge of fifteen (15) cents per page

Adopted: 4/15/15

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- Postage and shipping fees, including containers, will be charged if copied material must be mailed
- Document scans will be charged at ten (10) cents per page produced in electronic format.
- Any color or non-standard copies or items will be provided at actual cost, including the charge for staff time necessary for making such copies.
- Staff time necessary for loading electronic records onto a disc or into an email will be charged at actual cost.
- At its discretion, the Library may, as a condition of fulfilling the request, require the Requestor to make a deposit up to ten percent (10%) of the estimated costs of fulfilling the request. If records are being produced and released in an installment basis, the Library may charge for each installment.
- At its discretion, the Public Records Officer may elect to waive these fees. Fees may generally be waived when the expense of billing exceeds the cost of copying and postage.
- If charges related to copying have not been paid by the Requester, the Public Records Officer may withhold the relevant documents from disclosure until outstanding fees are paid by the Requester.

Loss of right to inspect

Inspection shall be denied and the records withdrawn by the Public Records Officer if the requester, when reviewing records, acts in a manner which will damage or substantially disorganize the records or interfere excessively with other essential functions of the Library.

Closing the request

Once all copies of requested records have been provided to the requester, the requester has reviewed the requested records, or 15 days have passed since the requester was notified that the records were available and the requester has failed to contact the Public Records Officer to arrange for the review of those records or for payment for copies, the Public Records Officer shall close the records request.

Board agendas

The current month's Agenda Packet to the Board of Trustees is available for inspection at the desk of the Library Director by Monday of the week of the Board of Trustees meeting and during all board meetings.

All agendas, resolutions and adopted minutes of previous meetings of the Board of Trustees are available for inspection at the desk of the Library Director. All adopted minutes are available on the library website at www.ritzvillelibrary.com.

Disclaimer of liability

Neither the Library nor any officer, employee, official or custodian shall be liable, nor shall a cause of action exist, for any loss or damage based upon a release of public records if the person releasing the records acted in good faith in attempting to comply with this policy.