

WAC 30-04-055 Response to public records request. (1) The public records officer shall respond to public records requests within five business days by:

(a) Providing the record;

(b) Acknowledging receipt of the request and providing a reasonable estimate of the time the commission will require to respond to the request; or

(c) Denying the public record request. Responses refusing in whole or in part the inspection of a public record shall include a statement of the specific exemption authorizing the withholding of the record (or any part) and a brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the record(s) withheld.

(2) Additional time to respond to the request may be based upon the need to:

(a) Clarify the intent of the request;

(b) Locate and assemble the information requested;

(c) Notify third persons or agencies affected by the request; or

(d) Determine whether any of the information requested is exempt and that a denial should be made as to all or part of the request.

(3) In acknowledging receipt of a public record request that is unclear, the public records officer may ask the requestor to clarify what information the requestor is seeking. If the requestor fails to clarify the request, the public records officer need not respond to it.

(4) If the public records officer does not respond in writing within five working days of receipt of the request for disclosure, the person seeking disclosure shall be entitled to:

(a) Consider the request denied; and

(b) Petition the public records officer under WAC 30-04-080.

(5) If the public records officer responds within five working days acknowledging receipt of the request and providing an estimate of the time required to respond to the request, and the requestor feels the amount of time stated is not reasonable, the person seeking disclosure shall be entitled to petition the public records officer for a review of the estimate of time. The procedures set out in WAC 30-04-080 shall apply to this review.

(6) Only after a determination has been made that all, or such portion of a public record as is not redacted, may be inspected, shall such public record or portion thereof be made available for inspection by appointment.

(7) The request for an appointment shall be made in writing to the public records officer. The public records officer shall acknowledge such request for an appointment within two business days of the receipt of such request and will provide the requestor with the date(s) that such an appointment could be kept by an authorized staff person.

(8) The viewing of those records that require specialized equipment shall be limited to the availability of that equipment located at the commission office and the availability of authorized staff to operate that equipment.

(9) In all cases, it shall be the obligation of the public records officer to:

(a) Locate the specific document(s) requested by the member of the public in the most timely manner possible;

(b) Assist the member of the public in appropriately identifying the public record requested;

- (c) Protect and otherwise prevent damage to the public record being inspected and copied;
- (d) Prevent disorganization of file folders or document containers;
- (e) Remain in the company of the member of the public at all times during which a public document is being inspected, and provide the fullest assistance possible; and
- (f) Prevent excessive interference with the other essential functions of the commission.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 43.46 RCW. WSR 10-23-102, § 30-04-055, filed 11/16/10, effective 12/17/10.]