

WAC 174-276-080 Determination regarding exempt records. (1) The college reserves the right to determine that a public record requested in accordance with the procedures of this chapter is exempt under the provisions of RCW 42.17.310. Such determination may be made in consultation with any of the records officers of the college, president of the college, or an assistant attorney general assigned to the college.

(2) Responses to requests for records must be made promptly. For the purpose of these rules, a prompt response occurs if the person requesting the public record is notified within five business days as to whether her or his request for a public record will be honored.

(3) No denial of a request for public records shall be valid unless accompanied by a written statement, signed by the public records officer or his or her designee, specifying the specific reasons therefor. The following nonexhaustive lists are examples of records exempted from public inspection and copying:

(a) Personal information in any files maintained for students in public schools; patients or clients of public institutions or public health agencies; welfare recipients; prisoners, probationers, or parolees.

(b) Personal information in files maintained for employees, appointed or elected officials, or any public agency to the extent that disclosure would violate their right to privacy.

(c) Information required of any taxpayer in connection with the assessment or collection of any tax, if the disclosure of the information to other persons would violate the taxpayer's right to privacy or would result in unfair competitive disadvantage to such taxpayer.

(d) Specific intelligence information and specific investigative files compiled by investigative, law enforcement and penology agencies, and state agencies vested with the responsibility to discipline members of any profession, the nondisclosure of which is essential to effective law enforcement or for the protection of any person's right to privacy.

(e) Information revealing the identity of persons who are witnesses to or victims of crime or who file complaints with investigative, law enforcement or penology agencies, except as the complainant may authorize.

(f) Test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used to administer a license, employment or academic examination.

(g) Except as provided by chapter 8.26 RCW, the contents of real estate appraisals, made for or by any agency relative to the acquisition of property, until the project is abandoned or until such time as all of the property has been acquired, but in no event shall disclosure be denied for more than three years after the appraisal.

(h) Valuable formulae, designs, drawings and research data obtained by any agency within five years of the request for disclosure when disclosure would produce private gain and public loss.

(i) Preliminary drafts, notes, recommendations, and intra-agency memoranda in which opinions are expressed or policies formulated or recommended, except that a specific record shall not be exempt when publicly cited by an agency in connection with any agency action.

(j) Records which are relevant to a controversy to which an agency is a party but which records would not be available to another party under the rules of pretrial discovery for causes pending in the superior courts.

(k) Information required of any taxpayer in connection with the assessment or collection of any tax if the disclosure of information would:

(i) Be prohibited to such persons by RCW 82.32.330; or
(ii) Violate the taxpayer's right to privacy or result in unfair competitive disadvantage to the taxpayer.

(l) Records, maps, or other information identifying the location of archeological sites in order to avoid the looting or depredation of such sites.

(m) Any library record, the primary purpose of which is to maintain control of library materials, or to gain access to information, which discloses or could be used to disclose the identity of a library user.

(n) All applications for public employment, including the names of applicants, resumes, and other related materials submitted with respect to the applicant.

(o) The residential addresses and residential telephone numbers of employees or volunteers of a public agency which are held by the agency in personnel records, employment or volunteer rosters, or mailing lists of employees or volunteers. RCW 51.36.120.

(p) Client records maintained by an agency that is a domestic violence program as defined in RCW 70.123.020 or 70.123.075 or a rape crisis center as defined in RCW 70.125.030.

(q) Information that identifies a person who, while an agency employee:

(i) Seeks advice, under an informal process established by the employing agency, in order to ascertain his or her rights in connection with a possible unfair practice under chapter 49.60 RCW against the person; and

(ii) Requests his or her identity or any identifying information not be disclosed.

(r) Investigative records compiled by an employing agency conducting a current investigation of a possible unfair practice under chapter 49.60 RCW or of a possible violation of other federal, state, or local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment.

(s) Business related information protected from public inspection and copying under RCW 15.86.110.

(4) The exemptions of this section shall be inapplicable to the extent that information, the disclosure of which would violate personal privacy or vital government interest, can be deleted from the specific records sought. No exemption shall be construed to permit the nondisclosure of statistical information not descriptive of any readily identifiable person or persons.

(5) Prior to releasing personal information regarding an identifiable person or persons, the college must notify the affected person or persons in writing and provide them with a two-week opportunity to seek an injunction through Thurston County superior court preventing the release of the document or documents in question. The affected person or persons may waive the two-week notice requirement under this section by contacting the public records officer in writing of said waiver.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.40.120(12). WSR 97-13-047, § 174-276-080, filed 6/13/97, effective 7/14/97. Statutory Authority: Chapter 34.05 RCW. WSR 90-04-011, § 174-276-080, filed 1/26/90, effective 2/26/90.]