

**WAC 256-20-040 Processing of public records requests—General.**

(1) **Acknowledging receipt of request.** Within five business days of receipt of the public records request, the public records officer will respond by:

(a) Notifying the requestor that the documents requested for inspection are available, and make the records available for inspection;

(b) Providing copies of the requested documents to requestor if payment of a deposit for the copies, if any, is made or terms of payment are agreed upon;

(c) Acknowledging receipt of the request, and provide a reasonable estimate of when records will be available. Additional time for eastern Washington state historical society to respond may be based upon:

(i) Need to identify, locate, assemble and/or make the records ready for inspection or disclosure;

(ii) Need to notify third persons or agencies affected by the request;

(iii) Need to determine whether any of the records or information requested is exempt from disclosure and whether a denial should be made as to all or part of the request; or

(iv) Need to clarify the request, if it is unclear or does not sufficiently identify the requested records, request clarification from the requestor. Such clarification may be requested and provided by telephone; or

(d) Denying the request.

(2) **Consequences of failure to respond.** If the eastern Washington state historical society does not respond in writing within five business days of receipt of the request for disclosure, the requestor should consider contacting the public records officer to determine the reason for the failure to respond.

(3) **Protecting rights of others.** In the event that the requested records contain information that may affect rights of third persons or agencies and may be exempt from disclosure, the public records officer may, prior to providing the records, give notice to such others whose rights may be affected by the disclosure. Such notice should be given so as to make it possible for those other persons to contact the requestor and ask him or her to revise the request or, if necessary, seek an order from a court to prevent or limit the disclosure. The notice to the affected persons will include a copy of the request.

(4) **Records exempt from disclosure.** Some records are exempt from disclosure, in whole or in part. If the eastern Washington state historical society believes that a record is exempt from disclosure and should be withheld, the public records officer will state the specific exemption and provide a brief explanation of why the record or a portion of the record is being withheld. If only a portion of a record is exempt from disclosure, but the remainder is not exempt, the public records officer will redact the exempt portions, provide the nonexempt portions, and indicate to the requestor why portions of the record are being redacted.

(5) **Inspection of records.**

(a) Consistent with other business demands, the eastern Washington state historical society will provide space to inspect public records. No requestor or representative of the requestor may remove a document from the viewing area or disassemble or alter any document. The requestor shall indicate which documents he or she wishes the eastern Washington state historical society to copy.

(b) The requestor must claim or review the assembled records within thirty days of eastern Washington state historical society's notification to him or her that the records are available for inspection or copying. The eastern Washington state historical society will notify the requestor in writing of this requirement and inform the requestor that he or she should contact the eastern Washington state historical society to make arrangements to claim or review the records. If the requestor or a representative of the requestor fails to claim or review the records within the thirty-day period or make other arrangements, the eastern Washington state historical society may close the request and refile the assembled records. Other public records requests can be processed ahead of a subsequent request by the same person for the same or almost identical records, which can be processed as a new request.

(6) **Providing copies of records.** After inspection is complete, the public records officer or designee shall make the requested copies or arrange for copying.

(7) **Providing records in installments.** When the request is for a large number of records, the public records officer or designee will provide access for inspection and copying in installments, if he or she reasonably determines that it would be practical to provide the records in that way. If, within thirty days, the requestor fails to inspect the entire set of records or one or more of the installments, the public records officer or designee may stop searching for the remaining records and close the request.

(8) **Completion of inspection.** When the inspection of the requested records is complete and all requested copies are provided, the public records officer or designee will indicate that the eastern Washington state historical society has completed a diligent search for the requested records and made any located nonexempt records available for inspection.

(9) **Closing withdrawn or abandoned request.** When the requestor either withdraws the request or fails to fulfill his or her obligations to inspect the records or pay the deposit or final payment for the requested copies, the public records officer will close the request and indicate to the requestor that the eastern Washington state historical society has closed the request.

(10) **Later discovered documents.** If, after the eastern Washington state historical society has informed the requestor that it has provided all available records, the eastern Washington state historical society becomes aware of additional responsive documents existing at the time of the request, it will promptly inform the requestor of the additional documents and provide them on an expedited basis.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 27.34 RCW, RCW 42.56.040, 27.34.070, and 43.21C.120. WSR 17-07-057, § 256-20-040, filed 3/11/17, effective 4/11/17.]