

**Chapter 415-06 WAC  
PUBLIC RECORDS**

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**WAC**

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**WAC 415-06-010 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter shall be to ensure compliance by the department of retirement systems with the provisions of chapter 1, Laws of 1973, (Initiative 276), Disclosure—Campaign finances—Lobbying—Records; now codified as chapter 42.17 RCW.

[Order 4, § 415-06-010, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-020 Definitions.** (1) **Public records.** "Public record" includes any writing containing information relating to the conduct of governmental or the performance of any governmental or proprietary function prepared, owned, used or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics.

(2) **Writing.** "Writing" means handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, and every other means of recording any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds; or symbols, or combination thereof, and all papers, maps, magnetic or paper tapes, photographic films and prints, magnetic or punched cards, discs, drums and other documents.

(3) "Department" means the department of retirement systems.

(4) "Director" means the director of retirement systems.

[Order 4, § 415-06-020, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-030 Public records officer.** The department's records shall be in the charge of the public records officer designated by the department. The person so designated shall be located in the administrative office of the department. The public records officer shall be responsible for the following: The implementation of the departments rules and regulation regarding release of public records, coordinating the staff of the department in this regard, and generally insuring compliance by the staff with the public records disclosure requirements of chapter 1, Laws of 1973.

[Order 4, § 415-06-030, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-040 Office hours.** Public records shall be available for inspection and copying during the customary office hours of the department. For the purposes of this chapter, the customary office

hours shall be from 9:00 a.m. to noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays.

[Order 4, § 415-06-040, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-050 Requests for public records.** In accordance with requirements of chapter 1, Laws of 1973 that agencies prevent unreasonable invasions of privacy, protect public records from damage or disorganization, and prevent excessive interference with essential functions of the agency, public records may be inspected or copied or copies of such records may be obtained, by members of the public, upon compliance with the following procedures:

(1) A request shall be made in writing upon a form prescribed by the department which shall be available at its administrative office. The form shall be presented to the public records officer; or to any member of the department's staff, if the public records office is not available, at the administrative office of the department during customary office hours. The request shall include the following information:

(a) The name of the person requesting the records;  
(b) The time of day and calendar date on which the request was made;

(c) The nature of the request;

(d) If the matter requested is referenced within the current index maintained by the records officer, a reference to the requested record as it is described in such current index;

(e) If the requested matter is not identifiable by reference to the department's current index, an appropriate description of the record requested.

(2) In all cases in which a member of the public is making a request, it shall be the obligation of the public records officer or staff member to whom the request is made, to assist the member of the public in appropriately identifying the public record requested.

[Order 4, § 415-06-050, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-060 Fees.** (1) No fee shall be charged for the inspection of public records or for locating public records and making them available for copying. However, the department may charge fees for copying and providing copies of public records. Such fees will not exceed the rates established in RCW 42.56.120, as amended by section 3, chapter 304, Laws of 2017.

(2) Pursuant to RCW 42.56.120, as amended by section 3, chapter 304, Laws of 2017, the department declares for the following reasons that it would be unduly burdensome to calculate the actual costs of copying and providing copies of public records: Department resources were not allocated for performing a study to calculate the actual costs; the department lacks the necessary resources to perform such a study and calculations; and such a study would interfere with and disrupt other essential department functions.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5). WSR 17-24-021, § 415-06-060, filed 11/28/17, effective 12/29/17; Order 4, § 415-06-060, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-070 Exemptions.** (1) The department reserves the right to determine that a public record requested in accordance with the procedures outlined in WAC 415-06-050 is exempt under the provisions of section 31, chapter 1, Laws of 1973.

(2) In addition, pursuant to section 26, chapter 1, Laws of 1973, the department reserves the right to delete identifying details when it makes available or publishes any public record, in any cases when there is reason to believe that disclosure of such details would be an invasion of personal privacy protected by chapter 1, Laws of 1973. The public records officer will fully justify such deletion in writing.

(3) All denials of requests for public records must be accompanied by a written statement specifying the reason for the denial, including a statement of the specific exemption authorizing the withholding of the record and a brief explanation of how the exemption applies to the record withheld.

[Order 4, § 415-06-070, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-080 Review of denials of public records requests.**

(1) Any person who objects to the denial of a request for a public record may petition for prompt review of such decision by tendering a written request for review. The written request shall specifically refer to the written statement by the public records officer or other staff member which constituted or accompanied the denial.

(2) Immediately after receiving a written request for review of a decision denying a public record, the public records officer or other staff member denying the request shall refer it to the director or an assistant director of the department. The director or assistant shall immediately consider the matter and either affirm or reverse such denial as soon as legally possible. In any case, the request shall be returned with a final decision, within two business days following the original denial.

(3) Administrative remedies shall not be considered exhausted until the director has returned the petition with a decision or until the close of the second business day following denial of inspection, whichever occurs first.

[Order 4, § 415-06-080, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-090 Records index.** (1) Purpose. This rule is intended to implement RCW 42.17.260 (4)(a) and (b), which require state agencies to establish and implement a system of indexing for certain records maintained by state agencies.

(2) Responsibility for department's indexing system. The department's indexing system for records covered under this section is administered by the manager of the files unit. All record indices described in this section shall be located at the department's files unit.

(3) The department shall establish and implement a system of indexing for all records issued before July 1, 1990, for which the department has maintained an index. The department has maintained an index for the following records which have existed before July 1, 1990:

(a) "Final opinions" which include the director's final orders and other final orders in adjudicative proceedings concerning the department;

(b) "Statements and interpretations of law and policy" which include the department's "DRS notices" advising employers of the department's position regarding law and/or policy; and formal and informal opinions by the state attorney general's office, used by the department as the basis for administrative decisions;

(c) "Administrative staff manuals and instructions" which affect members of the public;

(d) "Planning policies and goals";

(e) "Factual reports and studies" by department staff, consultants, other governmental entities, and private organizations;

(f) "Correspondence" by the department in which the department determines or provides an opinion on the rights of state government, the public, subdivisions of state government, or any private party.

(4) The department shall establish and implement a system of indexing for the following records on or after July 1, 1990:

(a) "Final orders" which are issued in an adjudicative proceeding as defined by RCW 34.05.010(1) containing analyses or decisions of substantial importance to the department;

(b) "Declaratory orders" which are issued pursuant to RCW 34.05.240 containing analyses or decisions of substantial importance to the department;

(c) "Interpretive statements" which are a written expression of an opinion by the department, entitled "interpretive statement" by the department's director, or his or her designee, and relating to the meaning of a statute or other provision of law, court decision, or agency order; and

(d) "Policy statements" which are a written description of the department's current policy, entitled "policy statement" by the department's director, or his or her designee, and implementing a statute or other provision of law, or court decision, or agency order.

(5) The system of indexing the records identified in WAC 415-06-090 (3) and (4) is as follows:

(a) An index will be organized in WAC 415-06-090 (3) and (4).

(b) Staff of the department's legal/legislative affairs unit will select the final orders and declaratory orders to be indexed reviewing all final orders and declaratory orders entered after June 30, 1990, and evaluating the substantial importance of the orders.

(c) Records will be indexed by a phrase describing the record's subject, issue or holding, and by citation of the law involved. Examples of phrases to be used are "service credit," "retirement benefits," "membership," and "contributions."

(6) Availability: The department record index shall be available to all persons in the same manner as public records available for inspection, under chapter 415-06 WAC.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050 and 42.17.260 (4)(a) and (b). WSR 91-19-061, § 415-06-090, filed 9/16/91, effective 10/17/91; Order 4, § 415-06-090, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-100 How do I contact the department?** (1) Mailing address: Department of Retirement Systems, P.O. Box 48380, Olympia, WA 98504-8380.

(2) Street address: 6835 Capitol Blvd., Tumwater, WA 98501.

(3) Phone numbers: (360) 664-7000 or toll-free (outside Olympia area) 1 (800) 547-6657, or TDD (for the hearing impaired) (360) 586-5450.

- (4) Email address: recep@drs.wa.gov.
- (5) Website: http://www.drs.wa.gov.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5) and 42.17.250. WSR 03-24-052, § 415-06-100, filed 11/26/03, effective 12/27/03. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.50.050(5), 41.50.055(5), 34.05.220 (1)(b), 42.17.250. WSR 01-18-017, § 415-06-100, filed 8/24/01, effective 9/24/01; Order 4, § 415-06-100, filed 7/27/77.]

**WAC 415-06-110 Adoption of form.** The director hereby adopts for use by all persons requesting inspection and/or copying or copies of the department records, the form attached hereto as Appendix A, entitled "Request for public record."

APPENDIX A  
REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

Name of Requestor:  
 Address: Phone:  
 Date of Request: Time of Request:  
 Nature of Request:  
 1. Index Reference .....  
 2. If not identifiable by reference to the index, then describe the document(s) in detail. ....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 Signature .....

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For Office Use Only:  
 (1)  
 Request Record Record Withheld  
 Granted  Withheld  In part   
 (2) If withheld, name the exemption contained in section 31, chapter 1, Laws of 1973, which authorizes the withholding of the record or part of record: Subsection (1) ( ).  
 (3) If withheld, briefly explain how the exemption applies to the record withheld.  
 (4) If request granted, time ....., day .....

[Order 4, § 415-06-110, filed 7/27/77.]