

Plaistow Public Library	Policy: Right-to-Know/ Access to Official Records
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## **PURPOSE**

The Plaistow Public Library has created a Right-To-Know Law Request Policy and Form to assist the public with Right-to-Know requests under NH RSA 91-A. The form helps assure that the Library and requestor share the same understanding of the information being sought. The form is available on the Library website and at the main circulation desk.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

The Right-to-Know law does not require the Library to create a new record where one does not exist or to create a document in a format that does not already exist. The law also exempts a variety of government records from public disclosure. Some but not all of these exemptions are listed under RSA 91-A:5 (<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/VI/91-A/91-A-mrg.htm>).

The Library will accommodate requests for immediate access to readily available public records as long as doing so does not significantly disrupt its regular business operations. In such cases the Library will work together to arrange a mutually convenient time for the requestor to inspect the desired public records. For security reasons requestors may not access library computer systems that store public records when confidential records are also stored on the same systems.

## **PROCEDURES AND COMMUNICATIONS**

All official responses regarding Right-To-Know requests by the Library will be in writing (email or letter) from the Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees or his or her designee. The Library strongly urges all requestors to adhere to the same practice of making all communications in writing.

A Library representative will respond to a Right-To-Know request within five business days. The response will include the following:

1. Confirmation of the information requested;
2. References to information readily available elsewhere (e.g., minutes and annual reports on Library and Town websites);
3. A list of information or documents exempt from public disclosure, with citations to the relevant legal authorities;
4. Preferred method of delivery;
5. Probable time frame to fulfill the request; and,
6. Any applicable costs.

## **DOCUMENT PROVISION FEES**

There is no charge to inspect documents at the Library or for the Library to provide unredacted electronic copies of public documents already available in digital form. The Library cannot loan records for copying or for any other reason. If the Library will be providing information on a USB flash drive, the requestor must provide a new drive, sealed in its original package, or

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purchase a new flash drive from the Library. This assures the safety of the Library's computers and data.

A research charge of \$25.00 per hour shall apply if a requestor chooses not to personally inspect public records and requests instead that the Library conduct research on his or her behalf. The cost to provide physical copies of documents, or to provide electronic copies of documents only available in paper format, shall be \$1.00 per page. The fee to redact protected information in documents shall be \$25.00 per hour. Requestors must pay all applicable fees before receiving the requested documents.