

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas State University System

Public Information Act 101*

What is a Public Record?

Information collected, assembled, or maintained under a law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business

By a governmental body; or

For a governmental body and the governmental body owns or has right of access to it

Records can be in any recorded format, including:

Paper

Computer data including emails

Film/Microfilm

Video or audio recordings, including voicemail

Maps, Drawings, Photographs

What is a Public Information Request?

A **WRITTEN** request for information

Can be mailed, hand-delivered, emailed or faxed

Requestor does not have to give reasons for the information

Requested information does not have to answer questions from the requestor

You should not create information to fulfill a request

When is a Public Information Requested received?

On the day it came in, **not** on the day someone opened it and time starts the following business day

If the date it came in cannot be determined, it is the third day following the date of the request

What do I do if I get a PIA Request?

Contact the Public Information Coordinator

Get a copy of the request to PIC the same day

Follow any instructions/requests PIC makes of you

What does the Open Records Coordinator do when she gets the request?

Contacts each potentially responsive department to ascertain if they have responsive documents and give instructions

Responds to the requestor within 10 days with the materials or to let him/her know that we need more time

And/Or Responds to the requestor to let him/her know that we have estimated charges attached to this request

And/Or Responds to the requestor to let him/her know that we have filed a request for an OAG ruling

Locates, Collects, and Redacts mandatory confidential information to send to the requestor within a "prompt" time period as required by law

What steps should I take to ease the process of responding to a request?

1. Know your records
2. Keep confidential records separate when possible
3. Follow Records Retention Policy
4. Keep frequently requested records handy

All questions concerning Public Information/Open Records Requests should be addressed to:

Public Information Coordinator

publicinfo@sulross.edu

*The information provided above is not all encompassing, please refer to the Texas Public Information Act for all related statutes and rules about the process.