

Procedure for Open Records Requests

The best way for a governmental body to respond to a request for information is to promptly release the requested information. However, not every case is so straightforward. When confidential information is requested, or when a governmental body needs to protect its interests, a governmental body may need to seek to withhold certain information.

In any case, a governmental body must respond promptly to every request received. Generally, within ten business days, a governmental body must either:

- Release the information to the requestor;
- Give the requestor written notice of the date and time the requestor will get the information;
- Seek to withhold requested information by asking for a ruling from the Open Records Division; or
- Withhold information based on prior authorization.

Persons desiring to inspect or copy records of the appraisal district must make a written request for the desired records. The request shall identify the specific record(s) being requested.

In addition, it is preferable that the request identifies the name; address and phone number of the applicant so that the CAD may contact the requestor with the response to the request.

The department receiving a written request for records shall ensure that the request is marked with the date on which it was first received by the CAD. The Scurry County Appraisal District Open Records Request forms may be used, but all forms of written requests are acceptable.

Applications for inspection of or copying of records may be made through mail, e-mail, fax, or in person.

The Custodian of Records shall review the application to determine the following:

1. Whether the record being requested exists;
2. Whether the record is available, in use, or in storage; and,
3. Whether the record is subject to disclosure under state, federal, and local laws.

If a question exists as to whether the record is subject to disclosure, the record shall be referred to the CAD's attorney for review. Upon completion of the review, the Custodian of Records shall notify the applicant of the results of the review.

The Custodian of Records shall provide a requestor with written notice of actual estimated charges to the extent such notice is required by the Texas Public Information Act. The Custodian of Records may require a deposit in advance in accordance with the rules of the Texas Government Code and Public Information Act.

For Open Records and Public Information Training: www.texasattorneygeneral.gov select Open Government, select Governmental Bodies, then select Training Resources. Watch the Public Information Act Training and the Open Meetings Act Training and at the end of each video, follow instructions to print off the certificate.