

Policy Statement

Terra State Community College shall follow the guidelines set in place by the Ohio Revised Code Public Records Law 149.43.

Policy Details

Terra State Community College strictly adheres to the state's Public Records Act. All exemptions to openness are to be construed in their narrowest sense and any denial of public records in response to a valid request must be accompanied by an explanation, including legal authority, as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code. If the request is in writing, the explanation must also be in writing.

- A. Public Records, per the Ohio Revised Code, are defined as including the following: any document – paper, electronic (including, but not limited to email), or other format – that is created or received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of a public office that documents the organizations, or other activities of the office. All records of the College are public unless they are specifically exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Revised Code.
 1. It is the policy of the College that, as required by Ohio law, records will be organized and maintained so that they are readily available for inspection and copying.

Procedures

- B. Each request for public records should be evaluated for a response using the following guidelines:
 1. Although no specific language is required to make a request, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the public office to identify, retrieve, and review the records. If it is not clear what records are being sought, the records custodian must contact the requester for clarification and should assist the requestor in revising the request by informing the requestor of how the office keeps its records
 2. The requester does not have to put a records request in writing and does not have to provide his or her identity or the intended use of the requested public record.
 3. Public records are to be available for inspection during regular business hours, except for published holidays. Public records must be made available for inspection promptly. Copies of public records must be made available within a reasonable time. "Prompt" and "reasonable" consideration of the volume of records requested; the proximity of the location where the records are stored; and the necessity for any legal review of the records requested.
 4. Each request should be evaluated for an estimated length of time required to gather the records. Routine requests for records should be satisfied immediately if feasible to do so. Routine requests include but are not limited to, meeting minutes (both in draft and final form), budgets, salary information, forms and applications, personnel rosters, etc. If fewer than 20 pages of copies are requested or if the records are readily available in an electronic format that can be e-mailed or downloaded easily, these should be made as quickly as the equipment allows. If more copies are requested, an arrangement should be made with the requester on when the copies or computer files can be picked up. All requests for public records must either be satisfied or be acknowledged in writing by the Terra State Community College within three business days following the office's receipt of the request. If a request is deemed significantly beyond "routine," such as seeking a voluminous number of copies or requiring extensive research, the acknowledgment must include the need for additional time to fulfill request.

- 5. Any items within the request that may be exempt from disclosure. Please refer to the exemption section of the Ohio Sunshine Law for full details.
 - 6. Any denial of public records requested must include an explanation, including legal authority. If portions of a record are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions are to be redacted and the rest released. If there are redactions, each redaction must be accompanied by a supporting explanation, including legal authority.
- C. Documents in electronic-mail format are records as defined by the Ohio Revised Code when their content relates to the business of the office. Email is to be treated in the same fashion as records in other formats.
- 1. Records in private e-mail accounts used to conduct public business are subject to disclosure, and all employees or representatives are instructed to retain their e-mails that relate to public business and to copy them to their business e-mail accounts and/or to the office’s records custodian.
 - 2. The records custodian is to treat the e-mails from private accounts as records of the public office, filing them in the appropriate way, retaining them per established schedules and making them available for inspection and copying in accordance with the Public Records Act.

Resources

Contact the Human Resources department at HR@terra.edu for any questions.

Documentation

Definitions

Term Definition

Approval History

<i>Date</i>	<i>Policy/Procedure or Entire Document</i>	<i>Notes (Types of Actions)</i>	<i>**Approved by</i>
09/26/2007	Issued		
11/26/2024	Policy	Moved to a new template AG reviewed and approved	Victoria Black, Director of HR

**Full name of CASA Committee Chair, signatory, or designee

Effective Date: 09/26/2007

Next Review Date: 06/30/2027