DELAWARE COUNTY PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

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I. Introduction:

It is the policy of the Board of Commissioners, Delaware County, Ohio ("Board") that openness leads to a better informed citizenry, which leads to better government and better public policy. It is therefore the policy of the Board and the government of Delaware County, Ohio ("County") to strictly adhere to the State of Ohio's Public Records Act.

II. Purpose:

The Board acknowledges that the County maintains many records including, but not limited to, both fixed medium (i.e., paper, film, etc.) and electronic (i.e., email) that are used in the administration and operation of the County. The records maintained by the Board and/or the County and the ability to access them are a means to provide trust between the public and the County. To foster, maintain, and continue to build such trust, the Board and the County, in accordance with state law, adopt this Public Records Policy ("Policy"). (R.C. § 149.43(E)(2)).

III. Definitions:

As provided by the Ohio Revised Code, the following definitions apply to this Policy:

- A. "Records" includes any document, device, or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic, including an electronic record as defined in section 1306.01 of the Revised Code, created or received by or coming under the jurisdiction of any public office of the state or its political subdivisions, which serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office. (R.C. § 149.011(G)).
- B. "Public Record" means records kept by any public office, including, but not limited to, state, county, city, village, township, and school district units, and records pertaining to the delivery of educational services by an alternative school in this state kept by the nonprofit or for-profit entity operating the alternative school pursuant to section 3313.533 of the Revised Code. "Public record" does not mean any of the records listed in R.C. § 149.43(A)(1)(a) through (ss). (R.C. § 149.43(A)(1)).

IV. Scope:

All records of the Board and the County are public records unless they do not meet either or both of the definitions of "Records" or "Public Record" as defined by the Ohio Revised Code (R.C. § 149.011(G) and R.C. § 149.43(A)(1)) or are otherwise specifically exempt from disclosure pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code or applicable federal law.

V. Internal Procedure:

- A. Each office, department, or function that maintains records shall designate and maintain a designated employee who serves as the custodian of all records maintained by that office, department, or function.
- B. Each such designated employee and/or record custodian shall have a copy of this Policy or, in lieu of this Policy, a public records policy developed by that individual office, department, or function. The designated employee and/or record custodian shall, in writing, acknowledge receipt of this Policy or the public records policy developed by that individual office, department, or function in lieu of this Policy. (See Form 1) (R.C. 149.43(E)(2)).
- C. This Policy, as well as the Schedules of Records Retention and Disposition (RC-2) applicable to that office, department, or function are located at every location of that office in which the public may be given access to records.
- D. This Policy is a part of and shall be located in and/or attached to the County Employee Handbook.
- E. A poster which generally describes this Policy shall be displayed at every location in which the public may access records.
- F. The County shall maintain a public records log and, upon receipt, all public records requests shall be logged in the log. Upon completion of the request, all public records requests shall be logged out of the log.

VI. Fees and Costs:

A. Unless a different fee is required by law, in accordance with R.C § 149.43, the following fee schedule is established for providing copies or reproductions of public records:

Media Type	Unit	Cost Per Unit
Letter or Legal Sized Paper Copy (Single	Page	\$0.10
Side)		
Letter or Legal Sized Paper Copy (Double	Two Sided Page	\$0.10
Side)		
Certified Paper Copy	Page	\$2.10
Microfiche	Imaged Page	\$0.10
Film Duplication	Imaged Page	\$0.10
Film Duplication	Imaged Page	\$0.10
Computer Diskette	3.5" Diskette	\$1.00
Audio Cassette Tape	Tape	\$1.00
Video Cassette Tape	Tape	\$2.50
CD/CD Rom	Disk	\$1.00
Thumb Drive	Thumb Drive	Cost of Thumb Drive
Email Documents	Various Forms	No cost if
		electronically
		provided or, if
		redaction copies are
		required or copies on
		other media are
		requested/required,
		see cost per unit above
Any Other Media	Various Formats	Actual Cost of Media

- B. The above fee schedule shall be clearly posted and visible to the public at all locations authorized to provide copies of public records. (See Form 2).
- C. Advance payment is required before any copies are prepared.
- D. The Board and/or the County shall charge the actual cost of material for media not listed in the fee schedule above.
- E. As a result of security issues and to preserve the integrity of the County's computer systems, the Board and/or the County will not accept blank media supplied by the requesting party. The Board or the County will supply the media. The cost of the media is included in the fee schedule above or, if not contemplated in the fee schedule above, the media will be supplied at cost.
- F. The Board and/or the County shall notify the requesting party in advance in writing of any costs for labor or materials in situations where an outside vendor must be hired to fulfill the request(s).
- G. The Board and/or the County will charge the actual costs of postage and mailing supplies when the requesting party requires the public records to be transmitted via the United States Postal Service or any type of priority mail service.

VII. Availability/Inspection

- A. Upon request and subject to R.C. § 149.43(B)(1), all public records shall be promptly prepared and made available for inspection to any person during regular business hours, with the exception of legal holidays.
- B. Copies or reproductions of the requested records shall be made available at cost (See Fee Schedule) and within a reasonable period of time.
- C. "Promptly" and "Reasonable," as used above and in connection with the preparation and production of the requested records, is to be determined by the facts and circumstances of each public records request and should take into account the following:
 - 1. The opportunity for legal review,
 - 2. The volume of records requested, and,
 - 3. The proximity of the location where the records are stored.

VIII. Requests for Public Records

- A. Any person, including corporations, individuals, and even governmental agencies, may request public records, and will be allowed prompt inspection of public records and copies within a reasonable amount of time upon request.
- B. No specific language is required to make a request for public records. The requester must, however, identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the Board and/or the County to identify, retrieve, and review the records.
- C. If it is not clear what records are being sought, the records custodian shall contact the requester for clarification and should inform the requester of the manner in which the office keeps its records.
- D. To help identify, locate, or deliver the desired public records, the requester may be asked, but is not required, to:
 - 1. Put a records request in writing,
 - 2. Provide his or her identity, or
 - 3. Provide the intended use of the requested public record.

If the requester is asked for any of this information, he or she shall first be advised of the following:

- 1. The requester does not have to answer any of the above questions or provide a written request, and
- 2. The requester's refusal to provide any of this information does not

impair the requester's right to inspect and/or receive copies of the requested public records. (R.C. 149.43(B)(5)).

- E. For the purpose of enhancing the ability of the Board and/or the County to identify and provide for prompt inspection and/or copies of the requested records in a reasonable period of time, the requester may be provided with Form 3 for the requester to complete. If providing Form 3 to the requester, the requester shall be informed:
 - 1. The requester does not have to complete Form 3, and
 - 2. The requester's refusal to complete or provide any and/or all information on Form 3 does not impair the requestor's right to inspect and/or receive copies of the requested public records. (R.C. 149.43(B)(5)).

IX. Response/Release

- A. Requests for public records shall be processed the same regardless of the means by which the request was made. (Note Section X Special Provisions for Public Records Requests Received by Email, Regular Mail, or Other Delivery Service.)
- B. The records custodian shall complete the public records request using Form 4 or otherwise substantially documenting the information contained in Form 4.
- C. Requests for records that are capable of being satisfied immediately and about which there are no issues concerning release or inspection should be satisfied immediately.
- D. Requests for public records that are not capable of being satisfied immediately shall be processed as follows:
 - 1. Voluminous/Copying or Reproduction Time Required Request (see Form 5 for sample response):
 - a. Each such request for public records should be evaluated for the estimated number of copies required to satisfy the request and/or an estimated length of time required to gather the records.
 - b. The requester shall be informed of the estimated length of time required to respond.
 - c. The requester shall be informed of the estimated total fee/cost associated with copying or reproducing and delivery of the record(s) and that such estimated total cost must be paid in full prior to the record(s) being copied or reproduced.
 - d. The requester shall be informed that any difference between the total estimated cost and the total actual cost shall be settled either by the County re-paying any overage or, prior to the delivery of the records,

- the requester paying any deficit.
- e. The requester shall be informed of any items within the request that may be exempt from disclosure.
- f. If the request is made verbally the above information shall be provided to the requester either verbally or in writing. If the request is made in writing, the requester shall be informed of the above information in writing.
- g. All such information as required above shall be provided to the requester no more than three (3) days after receiving the request.
- h. Considering the volume of records requested, the requested records should be made available to the requester within a reasonable period of time.

2. Legal Issue Concerning Release (see Form 6 for sample response):

- a. In the event a request for public records is made to inspect and/or obtain a copy of a record whose release may be prohibited or exempted by either state or federal law, the request shall be forwarded to legal counsel (e.g., Delaware County Prosecuting Attorney) for research and/or review.
- b. The person submitting the request shall be advised that their request is being reviewed by legal counsel to ensure that protected and/or exempted information is not improperly released. If the request is made verbally this information shall be provided to the requester either verbally or in writing. If the request is made in writing, the requester shall be informed in writing.
- c. If after review, it is determined that the record shall be released or inspection should be permitted, refer to subsection (E) below.
- d. If after review, it is determined that the record shall NOT be released, refer to Section XIII.
- E. Copied records may be forwarded to the requestor by any means reasonably acceptable to the requester or the requestor shall be permitted to inspect the records.
- F. Records whose release is prohibited or exempted by either state or federal law, or which are not considered public records as defined by R.C. 149.43(A)(1), shall NOT be subject to public release or inspection. Refer to Section XIII.

X. Special Provisions for Public Records Requests Received by Email, Regular Mail, or Other Delivery Service

A. Requests for public records received by email, regular mail, or other delivery service shall be responded to in the same manner as public records requests received via any other means, except that the records custodian, upon receipt of the request, shall, by any means practical, contact the requester and advise them as follows:

- 1. Advance payment is required prior to providing copies of public records,
- 2. The estimated total fee/cost associated with copying or reproducing and delivery of the record(s) and that such estimated total cost must be paid in full prior to the record(s) being copied or reproduced.
- 3. That any difference between the total estimated cost and the total actual cost shall be settled either by the County re-paying any overage or, prior to the delivery of the records, the requester paying any deficit.
- 4. Any items within the request that may be exempt from disclosure.
- B. Upon receipt of the fees/costs and where no issues concerning release exist, the copied or reproduced records shall be forwarded to the requester by any means reasonably acceptable to the requester.
- C. Voluminous requests, requests requiring time for copying or reproduction, and/or requests involving legal issues concerning release shall in all other respects be handled in accordance with Section IX.

XI. Medium

- A. The requester shall be permitted to choose to have the public record duplicated upon paper, upon the same medium upon which the public office or person responsible for the public record keeps it, or upon any other medium upon which the public office or record custodian determines that it reasonably can be duplicated as an integral part of the normal operations of the public office or records custodian. When the requester makes a choice, the public office or records custodian shall provide a copy of the public record(s) in accordance with the choice made by the requester. (R.C. 149.43(B)(6)).
- B. Persons seeking copies of public records are not permitted to make their own copies of the requested records regardless of means or media. (R.C. 149.43(B)(6)).

XII. Limited Requests

- A. In accordance with section 149.43(B)(7) of the Ohio Revised Code, the Board and the County limits the number of requested public records to be transmitted through United States mail to a maximum of ten records per month, unless the requester certifies that the records or information in them will not be used for commercial purposes.
- B. For purposes of this section, "commercial purposes" shall be narrowly construed and does not include reporting or gathering news, reporting or gathering information to assist citizen oversight or understanding of the operation or activities of government, or nonprofit educational research.

XIII. Response/Denial

A. Records Not Maintained by the Office Where the Request is Made

- 1. The requested records have never been maintained by the office where the request is made,
- 2. The requested records are no longer maintained or have been disposed of or transferred pursuant to applicable Schedules of Record Retention and Disposition (RC-2),
- 3. The requested record is a record that has been disposed of pursuant to an Application of the One-Time Records Disposal (RC-1) or Certificate of Records Disposal (RC-3),
- 4. The requested record is not a record used or maintained by the office where the request is made.

In such case, the requester shall be notified that in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 149.40, that there is no record responsive to the request and there is no requirement to create records to meet public record requests.

B. Ambiguous or Overly Broad Request for Public Records (R.C. 149.43(B)(2))

If a requester makes an ambiguous or overly broad request or has difficulty in making a request for copies or inspection of public records such that the office or person responsible for the requested public record cannot reasonably identify what public records are being requested:

- 1. The request may be denied.
- 2. However, the requestor shall be provided with an opportunity to revise the request and informed of such opportunity. In such case, the records custodian shall also inform the requester of the manner in which records are maintained by the office and accessed in the ordinary course of the office's or records custodian's duties.

C. Denial of the Public Records Request

- 1. The request for a record or public record maintained by the office where the request is made may be denied if the record that is requested is prohibited from release due to applicable state or federal law.
 - a. Any denial of public records requested must include an explanation, including legal authority.
 - b. 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. Employees shall consult legal counsel if they are unsure of whether the record requested or a portion of a requested record should be

withheld from disclosure or redacted.

- 2. As governed by R.C. 149.43(B)(3), if a request is ultimately denied, in whole or in part, the requester shall be provided with an explanation, including legal authority, setting forth why the request was denied.
- 3. If the initial request was provided in writing, then the explanation shall also be provided in writing.
- 4. The explanation shall not preclude the Board or the County from relying upon additional reasons or legal authority in defending an action commenced pursuant to R.C. 149.43.

D. Redaction/Procedure

1. Definition and Effect of a Redaction

- a. "Redaction" means obscuring or deleting any information that is exempt from the duty to permit public inspection or copying from an item that otherwise meets the definition of a "record" in section 149.011 of the Ohio Revised Code. (R.C. 149.43 (A)(13)).
- b. A redaction shall be deemed a denial of a request to inspect or copy the redacted information, except if federal or state law authorizes or requires a public office to make the redaction. (R.C. 149.43(B)(1)).

2. Redaction Procedure

- a. If a public record contains certain information that is exempt from the duty to permit public inspection or copying, the information within the public record that is exempt shall be redacted and that information in the record which is not exempt shall be made available.
- b. Where a redaction is to be made, the records custodian may make the redaction electronically (computer) or physically (marker).
- c. Electronic redactions shall be made and saved in a separate file from the original record, so that an original record without the redactions is maintained. The redactions shall not be capable of being removed from the record in the separately saved file. The separately saved file containing the redacted record shall be the file/copy of the record that is released to the requester.
- d. Physical redactions shall be made by reproducing a copy of the page where the redaction is to be made. The redaction shall be made on the copied page. The copied page shall then be re-copied with the redactions. The resulting copy shall be the page that is released to the requester. The first reproduction page with the original redactions made by the employee is the work sheet. It shall be attached to the original record, and maintained in accordance with the retention period established for the original document.

- e. When making a redacted public record available for public inspection or copying, the records custodian shall notify the requester of any and all redactions and/or make any and all redactions plainly visible. (R.C. 149.43(B)(1)).
- f. As governed by R.C. 149.43(B)(3), if a request is ultimately denied, in whole or in part, including redactions, the requester shall be provided with an explanation, including legal authority, setting forth why the request was denied or redaction was made.
- g. If the initial request was provided in writing, then the explanation shall also be provided in writing.
- h. The explanation shall not preclude the Board or the County from relying upon additional reasons or legal authority in defending an action commenced pursuant to R.C. 149.43.

XIV. Special Provisions Related to Email

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 shall be treated in the same fashion as records in any other format and should follow the same retention schedules.

- A. Records in private email accounts used to conduct public business are subject to disclosure, and all employees or representatives of the Board and the County are instructed to retain their e-mails that relate to public business and to copy them to their business email accounts and/or to the office's records custodian.
- B. The records custodian is to treat the emails 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.

XV. Grievances

- A. If a person is allegedly aggrieved due to the inability to inspect a public record or due to the inability to receive a copy of the public record, the person shall be advised that they may contact the senior representative of the office where the request was made.
- B. If the person is not satisfied after contacting the senior representative of the office where the request was made, they shall be advised that Ohio Revised Code section 149.43 provides a legal means for addressing their complaint in these disputes. (R.C. 149.43(C)).

XVI. Failure to Respond to a Public Records Request

The Board and the County recognize the legal and non-legal consequences of failure to properly respond to a public records request. In addition to the distrust in government that failure to comply may cause, the failure to comply with a request may result in a court ordering the Board and/or the County to comply with the law and to pay the requester's attorney's fees and damages.

XVII. Training and Education

The Board and the County continue to update and address all education, training, disclosure, and policy requirements mandated by R.C. 109.43 and R.C. 149.43(E).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE DELAWARE COUNTY PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

I,	am the designated employee and/or
record custodian for	. I hereby acknowledge that I have received on this
day of	, 20 a copy of the Delaware County Public Records
Policy dated March 27, 2024.	
DATE:	
SIGNATURE:	
PRINTED NAME:	
TITLE:	

FEE SCHEDULE AND POLICY REGARDING FEES FOR COPIES AND REPRODUCTIONS OF PUBLIC RECORDS

Unless a different fee is required by law, in accordance with R.C § 149.43, the following fee schedule is established for providing copies or reproductions of public records:

Media Type	Unit	Cost Per Unit
Letter or Legal Sized Paper Copy (Single Side)	Page	\$0.10
Letter or Legal Sized Paper Copy (Double Side)	Two-Sided Page	\$0.10
Certified Paper Copy	Page	\$2.10
Microfiche	Imaged Page	\$0.10
Film Duplication	Imaged Page	\$0.10
Film Duplication	Imaged Page	\$0.10
Computer Diskette	3.5" Diskette	\$1.00
Audio Cassette Tape	Tape	\$1.00
Video Cassette Tape	Tape	\$2.50
CD/CD Rom	Disk	\$1.00
Thumb Drive	Thumb Drive	Actual Cost of
		Thumb Drive
Email Documents	Various Formats	No cost if
		electronically
		provided or, if
		redaction copies
		are required or
		copies on other
		media are
		requested/required,
		see cost per unit
		above
Any Other Media	Various Formats	Actual Cost of
		Media

- A. The above fee schedule shall be clearly posted and visible to the public at all locations authorized to provide copies of public records.
- B. Advance payment is required before any copies are prepared.
- C. The Board and/or the County shall charge the actual cost of material for media not listed in the fee schedule above.
- D. As a result of security issues and to preserve the integrity of the County's computer systems, the Board and/or the County will not accept blank media supplied by the requesting party. The Board or the County will supply the media. The cost of the media is included in the fee schedule above or, if not contemplated in the fee schedule above, the media will be supplied at cost.
- E. The Board and/or the County shall notify the requesting party in advance in writing of any costs for labor or materials in situations where an outside vendor must be hired to fulfill the request(s).
- F. The Board and/or the County will charge the actual costs of postage and mailing supplies when the requesting party requires the public records be transmitted via the United States Postal Service or any type of priority mail service.

DELAWARE COUNTY, OHIO REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS (FORM 3)

Delaware County, Ohio government belongs to the citizens of Delaware County, Ohio. We conduct our government activities in the open and we are proud of our strong commitment to this important principle of democracy.

IMPORTANT:

COMPLETION OF THIS FORM IS NOT MANDATORY. YOUR REFUSAL TO COMPLETE OR PROVIDE ANY AND/OR ALL INFORMATION ON THIS FORM WILL NOT AFFECT YOUR RIGHT AND/OR ABILITY TO INSPECT AND/OR RECEIVE COPIES OR REPRODUCTIONS OF THE REQUESTED RECORDS. (R.C. 149.43(B)(5)).

IF YOU CHOOSE TO COMPLETE THIS FORM, IT WILL HELP US TO BETTER AND MORE EFFECTIVELY SERVE YOU IN PROVIDING YOU WITH THE RECORDS YOU ARE REQUESTING.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION: (Please Print.)

Today's Date		
Name		
Street Address		
City		
State		
Zip Code		
Email Address		
Telephone Number		
Facsimile Number		

2. INFORMATION ON RECORD REQUESTED: (Please Print.)

With as much specificity as possible, please describe what records you are requesting. (Use the back or attach other sheets as needed.)

3. INSPECTION OF RECORD: (Check your preference below.)

There is no charge to inspect public records while in the Delaware County, Ohio office where the records are kept. The County has adopted and provides photocopies and reproductions of public records in accordance with the Fee Schedule and Policy Regarding Fees for Copies and Reproductions of Public Records.

I would like to inspect these records in the office when they are ready.
I would like these records copies/reproduced and I will pick them up when they are ready.
I would like these records copied and mailed (i.e. U.S. Mail or courier service) to me at
the address on this form.
I would like these records copied and, if possible, emailed to me at the address on this
form.

4. MEDIUM:

Preferred Medium (i.e., paper, email (pdf or	
locked format only), CD-ROM, thumb drive,	
etc) for Copy/Reproduction. 1	

¹ Medium is limited by the determination of the record custodian as to the types of media upon which the record can reasonably be duplicated as an integral part of the normal operations of the public office or records custodian.

PROCESSING FORM FOR REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

Name of Requester	
Date Request Received	
Date Request Completed	

Name of Employee Handling Request	
I Maine of Childiovee Handing Keddesi	
1 turne or miniprojec remining request	

1. ESTIMATED NUMBER OF COPIES/FEES

Type of Unit	Estimated Number of Units	Cost Per Unit	Estimated Total of Fees/Costs

2. PREPAYMENT (REQUIRED)

Amount of Prepayment	
Receipt Number	

3. ACTUAL NUMBER OF COPIES/FEES

Type of Unit	Actual Number of Units	Cost Per Unit	Actual Total of Fees/Costs

4. SETTLEMENT WITH REQUESTOR

Yes / No / Not Applicable	Settlement Necessary
Yes / No / Not Applicable	Settlement Made

Amount of Refund to Requester	
Check/Warrant Number	

<u>OR</u>

Amount Due From Requester	
Paid	Yes / No

5. RECORDS NOT AVAILABLE

Re	ecord has never been maintained by the County/department/office.
l .	ecord is no longer maintained or has been disposed of or transferred pursuant to C-2
l .	ecord has been disposed of pursuant to an application of One-Time Records isposal RC-1 or Certificate of Records Disposal (RC-3)
Re	ecord is prohibited from release due to applicable state or federal law.
(Cite for the applicable state or federal law.

6. LEGAL ISSUE

Rec	cord has been forwarded to legal counsel f cord has been reviewed by legal counsel ar irety.	
Red	cord has been reviewed by legal counsel ar	nd contained non-releasable material
	Non-releasable material has been redac	ted
1 1	te for the applicable state or federal law	
Red	cord has been reviewed and release of the	entire record has been denied by lega
	insel.	
CI	ite for the applicable state or federal law.	

Date	
Mr. John Requester 123 North Sandusky Street Delaware, Ohio 43015	
Re: Public Request to	
Dear Mr. Requester:	
This letter is to acknowledge receipt by	of fice has e result, the
 We estimate that we can complete your request by If we to complete your request by that estimated date, then we will provide a new estion of completion. 	are not able mated date
2. The estimated total fee/cost associated with copying or reproducing and deli requested records is This amount must be office in advance of any copying or reproduction of the requested records. If you done so already, please forward this amount to this office as soon as possible office may proceed with your request and have your records ready for you specified above. A failure to forward this amount will result in a delay or the records not being produced. Any difference between the total estimated cost and total cost shall be settled either by: a) the County re-paying any overage to you to the delivery of the records, you paying the County any deficit.	paid to this ou have not so that this on the date e requested d the actual
3. There are/are not items within your request that may be exempt from disclos items which may be exempt are as follows.	ure. These
Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (740), or send mail to or meet with me pe	, ersonally at

Sincerely,

the above address.

Records Custodian

Date	
Mr. John Requester 123 North Sandusky Street Delaware, Ohio 43015	
Re: Public Request to	
Dear Mr. Requester:	
This letter is to acknowledge receipt by	of your request is s legal counsel
Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (740) or email me at, or send mail to or meet with me per above address.	rsonally at the
Sincerely,	

Records Custodian