



OFFICE OF  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

# PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS

## FACT SHEET



## THANK YOU...

For your assistance in responding to a public records request. Please see some helpful information below, for your reference when gathering public records.

## THE BASICS

The CA Public Records Act (CPRA) is designed to give the public access to information in possession of public agencies.

The South Orange County Community College District (SOCCCD) recognizes the right of citizens to have access to public records. SOCCCD intends to provide any person or organization reasonable access to the public records of SOCCCD, upon request.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,  
PLEASE CONTACT LETITIA CLARK:**



**lclark31@socccd.edu**



**949.582.4920**

## WHAT MUST HAPPEN: TIMELINE

1. Public records request is made.
2. Access to physical records is immediate, allowed anytime during business hours, and SOCCCD must aid in identifying relevant records and information.
3. A response (at least acknowledgement of request receipt) must be sent within 10 days stating whether:
  - a. The documents requested are determined to be disclosable public records, and the estimated date they will be ready,
  - b. The documents are posted on the website, and the location on the website,
  - c. A copy of the record necessitates an applicable copying charge,
  - d. The documents requested are determined not to be disclosable, in whole or in part. The notification of denial shall be in writing, with justification demonstrating that the record is exempt or that the public interest in confidentiality outweighs the public interest in disclosure.
4. Once response is made, the request and subsequent communication is logged by the Office of Public Affairs. (Requests for public records and SOCCCD's responses are themselves public records that may be requested.)



## WHAT'S NOT COVERED: PUBLIC RECORDS MAY NOT INCLUDE...

- Records that do not exist. The CPRA only applies to existing records. The District is under no obligation to create new documents to respond to a records request.
- Records which are designated as confidential, private, or privileged under other state/federal law.
- Employees' private papers, unless they relate to the conduct of the public's business and are prepared, owned, used, or retained by the agency.
- Records pertaining to pending claims/litigation and attorney-client privilege or work product.
- Identification number or unique identifying code that a district uses to identify a vendor or contractor, or an affiliate of a vendor or contractor, unless it is used in a public bidding or an audit involving the public agency.
- Preliminary drafts, notes, or memos that are not retained by the District in the ordinary course of business. Drafts are not exempted if: (1) staff normally keep copies; or (2) the report or document is final even if a decision is not.
- Financial data submitted for licenses, certificates, or permits, or given in confidence to agencies that oversee insurance, securities, or banking firms; tax, welfare, and family/adoption/ birth records are all exempt.
- Police incident reports, rap sheets, and arrest records are exempt, but information in the "police blotter" must be disclosed unless disclosure would endanger an investigation or the life of an investigator.
- Test questions, scoring keys, and other examination data used to administer a licensing examination, examination for employment, or academic examination (except for standardized tests provided for by Ed. Code Sections 99150 et seq.).
- Contents of real estate appraisals, engineering/feasibility estimates/evaluations relative to the acquisition of property, or to prospective public supply & construction contracts, until all property has been acquired or agreement obtained.
- Information security records, if disclosure of that record would reveal vulnerabilities to, or otherwise increase the potential for an attack on, the District's information technology system.
- Personnel, medical, or similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy.
- Home addresses, personal phone numbers, and birth dates of employees.
- Home address or phone numbers of local elected officials.
- Student records.

## WHAT'S COVERED: PUBLIC RECORDS MAY INCLUDE...

CPRA defines "public records" as "any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics."

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Electronic communications that relate to the conduct of the public's business, including, but not limited to, e-mails, voicemails, and text messages on elected officials' and employees' private devices or accounts
- Copyrighted materials
- List of employees, office phone numbers, and emails
- Advertisements, bids, and contracts, etc.

THIS IS NOT A FULL LIST OF EXCLUSIONS.  
SEE THE **CPRA**, **SOCCCD BP 3300**, AND **AR 3300**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Who can initiate a public records act request?**

Any member of the public may inspect public records or request copies of public records that are reasonably identified by the requester.

### **Who can respond to a public records request?**

Per Board policy, all public records requests must go through the Office of Public Affairs.

### **What types of records are public?**

Any record that is not exempt from disclosure by state law(s) is available. CPRA defines "public records" as "any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics."

### **Where can someone find info about requesting public records from SOCCCD?**

Public Records Request Information can be found on the Public Affairs page of the district website:  
[soccdd.edu/publicaffairs/pa\\_public\\_records\\_request.html](http://soccdd.edu/publicaffairs/pa_public_records_request.html)

### **How long does SOCCCD have to reply to public records requests?**

Upon receipt of a request for records, within ten (10) calendar days, the Office of Public Affairs will determine whether the records can be produced, if they are public, and will communicate the determination to the requestor. In unusual circumstances, the timeline may be extended by an additional fourteen (14) calendar days. The ten-day response period starts with the first calendar day after the date of receipt. If the request is received after 5pm on a weekday, or on a weekend or holiday, the next business day will be considered the date of receipt.

### **How can public records be sent?**

Public records may be made available in paper or electronic format.

### **Are there fees associated with Public Records Requests?**

Copies of records shall be promptly available to any person upon payment of a fee covering direct costs of duplication, if fees are determined applicable.

## REFERENCES

California Public Records Act

[SOCCCD Board Policy 3300](#)

[SOCCCD Administrative Regulation 3300](#)

## IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:



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