



## **Accessing Public Information Riverland Policy #4.35**

### **PURPOSE:**

It is the policy of Riverland Community College to respond to requests for public information in a reasonable, timely and efficient manner and comply with all federal and state laws that may be applicable to such requests.

**APPLICABILITY:** This guide is intended to facilitate timely and efficient responses to requests for public information. It addresses such questions as who to contact for access to different kinds of public information, and how to make a request.

**SCOPE:** Members of the public who want access to public data should do so in accordance with the Access to Public Data Procedure.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Public data.** All government data collected, created, received, maintained or disseminated by a government entity shall be public unless classified by statute, or temporary classification pursuant to section 13.06, or federal law, as nonpublic or protected nonpublic, or with respect to data on individuals, as private or confidential. The responsible authority in every government entity shall keep records containing government data in such an arrangement and condition as to make them easily accessible for convenient use. Photographic, photo-static, micro-photographic, or microfilmed records shall be considered as accessible for convenient use regardless of the size of such records.

### **DOES THIS POLICY HAVE A PROCEDURE?** (See Guidelines below)

#### **General Access Guidelines**

- Any member of the public is allowed to view public information without charge.
- Viewing of public information will be at reasonable times and places.
- Viewing does not include receiving copies of information unless providing a copy is the only way for us to provide viewing.
- Viewing includes remote access and the ability of the public to download public data on the public's own computer, but in some cases, we may charge for such access as permitted by law.
- We will provide access to public data as soon as we reasonably can, but we may not be able to provide the information you want immediately because we need time to locate or copy the information.
- We are not required to provide data that we do not keep.
- Upon request, we will provide copies of public data. We will charge for copies in accordance with applicable law.
- You are not required to identify yourself unless we need the information for some purpose such as sending the data, or clarifying your request; you don't have to tell us why you want the information unless we need it to comply with applicable laws.
- Upon request, we will explain the content and meaning of the data you requested.

- If we store the public data you want on a computer, you may ask that we provide a copy to you in electronic form, and we will do so if we reasonably can. We do not have to provide the data in a format or program that is different from how we store it, but if we agree to do so, we will charge you for the cost of providing the copy.
- If we determine that the data you request are not public, we will notify you and will tell you which law applies. If you ask, we will provide our decision in writing.

## **Requesting Specific Public Information**

### **A. Put your request in Writing**

Your request should be as specific as possible, describing the information you want as clearly as you can. We may need some time to locate the information you are requesting; clearly stating your request will help us to respond more efficiently. Please state that you are making a request under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

### **B. Send your request to the appropriate person**

#### **STUDENT RECORDS:**

Registrar's Office  
Riverland Community College  
1900 8th Avenue NW  
Austin, MN 55912  
Phone: 507-433-0610  
Fax: 507-433-0515

#### **PERSONNEL RECORDS:**

Human Resources Office  
Riverland Community College  
1900 8th Avenue NW  
Austin, MN 55912  
Phone: 507-433-0692  
Fax: 507-433-0349

#### **MEDIA REQUESTS:**

Communications, Media Relations & Marketing Office  
Riverland Community College  
900 8th Avenue NW  
Austin, MN 55912  
Phone: 507-433-0611  
Fax: 507-433-0629

## **LIST RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES OR FORMS:**

[Riverland Community College Data Privacy for Employees](#) – Policy 4.36

[Minnesota Statute 13.03 Access to Government Data](#)

[Minnesota State Data Access Procedures](#)

[Minnesota Management and Budget's \(MMB\) Policy](#)

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