

# COLUMBINE WATER DISTRICT

## POLICY ON RESPONDING TO OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS

The Columbine Water District (the "District") Board of Directors fully supports, and complies with, all Federal and State laws relating to the retention, protection and disclosure of District records including, but not limited to, the Colorado Open Records Act, Title 24, Article 72, Part 2, C.R.S. ("CORA"), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), and the Privacy Rule promulgated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services which interprets and implements HIPAA.

It is the policy of the District that all public records shall be open for inspection by any person at reasonable times, except as otherwise provided by law. Public records are defined by CORA as all writings made or maintained by the District, regardless of the format or medium of the records, subject to certain exceptions. Public records expressly include e-mail communications. The District maintains an archive of all e-mail messages for emergency backup purposes only; such archived e-mail communications are not individually retrievable and are specifically not intended to create a public record. By action of the Board of Directors of the District, the District Manager is hereby designated as the official Custodian of Records responsible for the maintenance, care and keeping of all records of the District. The official Custodian of Records shall have authority to designate such agents as he/she shall determine appropriate to perform any and all acts necessary to enforce and execute the provisions of this policy. Upon receipt, requests by a citizen, entity, Federal or State agency, District member, subpoena, Administrative or Court Order, or other legal process, to inspect and/or copy any District record (collectively referred to as a "Records Request") should be immediately sent to the Custodian of Records.

The following are general policies concerning the release of records:

1. Every Records Request shall be submitted to the District's Custodian of Records in writing and be specific as to the information desired.
2. If any question arises as to the propriety of fully complying with a Records Request, the Custodian of Records shall immediately forward it to the District's legal counsel.
3. The District's legal counsel shall determine the District's obligations under the applicable Federal and/or State law(s). If the District is permitted to comply with the Records Request in whole or in part, the District's legal counsel will so notify the District's Custodian of Records, who will assemble the disclosable requested documents for inspection and/or copying in accordance with applicable Federal or State law.
4. If the District's legal counsel determines the District is not permitted by Federal or State law to comply with the Records Request in whole or in part, legal counsel shall provide a written response to the party submitting the Records Request stating the legal basis upon which the Records Request in whole or in part is being denied.
5. The Custodian of Records may set the time during normal office hours and the place for records to be inspected and require that the Custodian of Records or a delegated employee be present while the records are examined. Pursuant to CORA, all records must be made available for inspection within three (3) working days, unless extenuating circumstances exist. The deadline may be extended by seven (7) working days if extenuating circumstances exist and the requesting party is notified of the delay within the statutory period.

6. A person granted the right to inspect District records will also be furnished copies requested at a cost not to exceed \$.25 per page in standard size and format. The charge for providing a copy, printout or photograph of a public record in a format other than a standard page will be assessed at the actual cost of production. Additionally, in those cases where the location or existence of specific documents must be researched, and such process requires one or more hours of staff time, the District may charge a research and retrieval fee not to exceed \$30 per hour, and no charge shall be made for the first hour of time expended in connection with the research and retrieval of public records. Any fee charged for the research and retrieval will be the same for all requesting parties, whether the person requesting the records is an individual, a representative of the media, a public or private entity, or a for-profit or nonprofit entity.

7. Upon request for records transmission by a person seeking a copy of any public record, the custodian will transmit a copy of the record by U.S. Mail, other delivery service, facsimile, or electronic mail. No transmission fees will be charged to the records requester for transmitting public records via electronic mail. Within three days of receiving the request, the custodian will notify the record requestor that a copy of the record is available but will only be sent to the requestor once the custodian either receives payment or makes arrangements for receiving payment for all costs associated with records transmission and for all other fees lawfully allowed, unless recovery of all or any portion of such costs or fees has been waived by the custodian. The custodian will include an estimate of the costs and fees that will be charged.

8. When practical, the copy, printout, or photograph of the requested record will be made in the place where the record is kept, but if it is impractical to do so, the custodian of records may allow arrangements to be made for the copy, printout, or photograph to be made at other facilities. If other facilities are necessary, the cost of providing requested records will be paid by the person making the request.

This policy shall supersede any previous policy related to records requests.

Dated this 21st day of July, 2014

COLUMBINE WATER DISTRICT

By:   
President

Attest:

By:   
Secretary/Treasurer