

VILLAGE OF WOODRIDGE
POLICY GOVERNING ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS
UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

1. SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

This Policy Governing Access to Public Records is established to implement the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. (P.A. 096-0542, effective January 1, 2010, Illinois Compiled Statutes, 5 ILCS 140/1) The purpose of these rules is to support the policy of providing public access to the public records in the possession of the Village while, at the same time, protecting legitimate privacy interest and maintaining administrative efficiency.

2. DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this Policy Governing Access to Public Record shall have the same meaning as in the Freedom of Information Act.

“FOIA” means Freedom of Information Act.

“Requestor” means a person who submits a request for public records in accordance with these Policy Rules.

3. PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING PUBLIC RECORDS

Requests for public records may be submitted to the Village Clerk or the Chief of Police. Requests for Police Department Information shall be submitted to the following address:

Steve Herron
Chief of Police
Woodridge Police Department
One Plaza Drive
Woodridge, IL 60517

Requests for public records other than Police Department Information should be submitted to the following address:

Jack Knight
Management Analyst/Deputy
Village Clerk’s Office
Five Plaza Drive
Woodridge, IL 60517

4. FORM AND CONTENT OF REQUEST

Requests in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Village of Woodridge Policy Governing Access to Public Records shall be made in writing. For the requestor's convenience, the Village has made a FOIA request form available for use.

The following information is requested when submitting a FOIA request:

1. The requestor's full name, address and phone number.
2. A brief description of the public records being sought, being as specific as possible. Please do not pose questions – if you do not know what document you are seeking please state which specific information is being sought.
3. Whether the request is for inspection of public records, copies of public records, or both.
4. Whether the request is for a commercial purpose.

5. TIMELINE FOR VILLAGE RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

The Village shall respond to a written request for public records within five (5) working days after the receipt of such request.

The Village may give notice of an extension of time to respond which does not exceed an additional five (5) working days. Such an extension is allowable only if written notice is provided within the original five (5) working day time limit and only for the reasons provided in the Act. Such notice of extension shall state the reasons why the extension is necessary and the date by which the records will be available or the denial will be forthcoming.

In cases where necessary, the requestor and the Village of Woodridge may agree in writing to extend the timeline for a response beyond the (5) working days specified for the response and the (5) working days extension.

6. TYPE OF VILLAGE RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

The Village shall respond to requests for public records in one (1) of three (3) ways:

1. Approve the request
2. Approve in part or deny request
3. Deny the request

Upon approval of a request for public records the Village may either provide the materials immediately, give notice that the materials shall be made available upon payment of reproduction costs or give notice of the time and place for inspection of records.

A denial of a request for public records shall be made in writing. It shall state the reasons for the denial and the names and titles of individuals responsible for the decision. If the denial is pursuant to an exemption set forth in Section 7 of the Freedom of Information Act, the notice of denial shall specify the exemption. It shall also give the notice of the requestor's right to appeal to the Public Access Counselor.

Categorical requests creating an undue burden upon the Village shall be denied only after extending to the requestor an opportunity to confer in an attempt to reduce the request to manageable proportions in accordance with Section 3(g) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Failure to respond to a written request within (5) working days shall be considered by the requestor a denial of the request.

7. PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL OF A DENIAL

A requestor whose FOIA request has been denied may appeal the denial to the Public Access Counselor (PAC) no later than 60 days after the date of the final denial. The notice of appeal may be made in writing and sent to:

Public Access Bureau
Office of the Attorney General
500 S. 2nd Street
Springfield, IL 62706

Any person denied access to inspect or copy any public record may file suit for injunctive or declaratory relief in circuit court.

8. PROCEDURES FOR PROVIDING RECORDS TO REQUESTORS

Inspection of records at Village offices - generally, public records will be made available for inspection during normal working hours of the Village at the Office of the Village Clerk, located at the Village Hall, Five Plaza Drive, Woodridge, Illinois, 60517, or at the Police Records Division, located at One Plaza Drive, Woodridge, Illinois, 60517.

Unless otherwise arranged, the inspection of records shall take place at the Office of the Village Clerk or at the Police Records Division.

Documents which the requestor wishes to have copied shall be segregated during the course of the inspection. An employee of the Village may be present throughout the inspection.

Generally, all copying shall be done by a Village employee. A requestor may be prohibited from bringing bags, brief cases or other containers in to the inspection room.

Copies of public records shall be provided to the requestor only upon payment of any charges which are due.

Charges for copies of public records shall be assessed in accordance with the "Fee Schedule for Duplication of Records" posted in the administrative offices of the Village of Woodridge.

Charges may be waived in any other case where the Village Clerk or Chief of Police determines that the waiver serves the public interest, pursuant to Section 6 of the Act.

9. GENERAL MATERIALS AVAILABLE

The Village of Woodridge through the Village Clerk's Office shall prominently display at each of its administrative or regional offices, make available for inspection and copying, send through the mail if requested, and post on its website each of the following:

1. A brief description that will include a short summary of the Village's purpose, a block diagram showing functional subdivisions, the total operating budget, the number and location of all separate offices, the approximate number of full and part-time employees, and the membership of the Village Board of Trustees, Board of Police Commissioners, Police Pension Board, and Plan Commission.
2. A brief description of the methods whereby the public may request information and public records, a directory designating the Freedom of Information officer or officers, the address where requests for public records should be directed, and any allowable fees.

10. DOCUMENTS IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE

The Village of Woodridge through the Village Clerk's Office shall make the following documents immediately available upon request:

1. Village Board Meeting Agendas and Approved Regular Board Meeting Minutes
2. Plan Commission Agendas and Approved Meeting Minutes
3. Ordinances and Resolutions
4. Proclamations

Freedom of Information Act request forms are available at the Village Hall at Five Plaza Drive, or at the Woodridge Police Department at One Plaza Drive, Woodridge, IL 60517, or on the Village website.