CITY OF MADISON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Public Records and Data Requests Policy

Overview

Effective: 10/01/2018

Amended: 04/22/2021

Objective: Comply with MGO 3.70 Public Records.

Comply with MGO 3.72 Public Accessibility to Municipal Data Sets.

Centralize requests for tracking purposes.

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Definitions

Record means all materials, regardless of format or characteristics, made or received by a public agency, its officers, or employees in connection with transaction of public business.

Data means final versions of statistical or factual information:

1. In alphanumeric form reflected in a list, table, graph, chart or other non-narrative form, that can be digitally transmitted or processed; and

2. Regularly created or maintained by or on behalf of and owned by an agency that records a measurement, transaction, or determination related to the mission of an agency. Such term shall not include information provided to an agency by other governmental entities, nor shall it include image files, such as designs, drawings, maps, photos, or scanned copies of original documents. Nothing in this ordinance shall be deemed to prohibit an agency from voluntarily disclosing information not otherwise defined as "data" in this subdivision.

Public Data Set means a comprehensive collection of interrelated data that is available for inspection by the public in accordance with any provision of the Wisconsin Public Records Laws (Wis. Stats. §§ 19.31-19.37) and the Madison Public Records Ordinance (Sec. 3.70, MGO) and is maintained on a computer system by, or on behalf of, any agency.

See MGO 3.72(2) for data sets that are not included in the definition of "public" data set.

Policy

Public Records Requests

Open records requests for Information Technology (IT) Department records can be made verbally or in writing. The IT Records Custodian responds to these requests in compliance with MGO 3.70.

Email Search Requests

All internal requests will be made via email to the IT Help Desk: helpdesk@cityofmadison.com.

Internal requests for email records are accepted from City of Madison Department/Division Heads or Records Custodians to aid in their response to open records requests. D/D Heads and Records Custodians must provide IT with a copy of the original written request containing specific parameters for the email search (keywords, dates, sender(s) and/or recipient(s), etc.). The department Records Custodian is responsible for all communication with the original requestor, including narrowing the search parameters, as needed. IT staff will provide the D/D Head or Records Custodian with all emails resulting from the search. The D/D Head or Records Custodian will review the emails in the email archive application for redaction and relevancy, and notify IT staff which emails are to be included in the response. Relevant emails will be converted to PDF and provided to the D/D Head or Records Custodian.

IT staff also respond to internal requests for email records for the purpose of potential disciplinary investigation of City employees. Requests with specific parameters (keywords, dates, sender(s) and/or recipient(s), etc.) are accepted from D/D Heads and Records Custodians.

NOTE: While IT maintains an archive of all emails sent from or to the City for seven (7) years, IT is not the custodian of these records. Open records requests for an employee's emails must be directed to the Records Custodian of the employee's department. Emails are retained according to content, so they may be retained in individual mailboxes longer than seven (7) years in accordance with the appropriate record series.

The IT Records Custodian will track internal requests for email records that are not related to internal employee investigations and all general open records requests directed to IT.

Data Requests

Per MGO 3.72, City public data sets will be made available online using open standards. Each City department is responsible for identifying and publishing data sets. The IT Department is available for consultation and technical support only. The public data sets are accessible through the City of Madison Open Data portal on the City's website.

Request from City departments for data not included in the public data sets will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, will be submitted via an email to the IT Help Desk, and will be tracked by the IT Records Custodian.