

**POLICY TITLE: Public Records Request Policy**

**POLICY NUMBER: ISDH-COMM-024-04**

**PURPOSE:** To ensure:

1. Public access, staff accountability, and timely, appropriate responses to requests for public records.
2. All requests are handled in a consistent manner and in conformity with the Indiana Access to Public Records Act (APRA).

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Denial:** A decision of the ISDH to refuse to disclose all or part of a requested public record.

**Designee:** A person chosen by an Assistant Commissioner to be responsible for assisting the public records coordinator with responses to public records requests in the person's division/program.

**Public Record:** Any writing, paper, report, study, map, photograph, book, card, tape recording, or other material that is created, received, retained, maintained, or filed by or with a public agency and which is generated on paper, paper substitutes, photographic media, chemically based media, magnetic or machine readable media, electronically stored data, or any other material regardless of form or characteristic.

**Public Records Coordinator:** The person responsible for responding to and tracking all non-routine, non-media requests for ISDH.

**Routine Request:** A request for a public record that the ISDH produces within one (1) business day without any portion of the request being denied.

**Non-Routine Request:** A request for a public record that:

- (1) the ISDH will not produce within one (1) business day;
- (2) the ISDH will deny or partially deny; or
- (3) the employee receiving the request must seek assistance with.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY:** It is the policy of the ISDH to permit citizens the opportunity to review and copy public records so that they may obtain information relating to their government and more fully participate in the governmental process.

ISDH shall have one primary employee, the public records coordinator, responsible for non-routine requests. All designees and employees shall assist the public records coordinator as needed to respond to non-routine requests.

**PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Employees shall forward non-routine, non-media requests to the public records coordinator immediately upon receipt of request. To forward requests by email, use the email address [publicrecords@isdh.in.gov](mailto:publicrecords@isdh.in.gov).
2. All public records requests from the media must be forwarded to the Office of Public Affairs.

3. Employees shall respond to routine requests by producing the requested documents within 24 hours.
4. Employees shall respond to verbal non-routine requests by informing the requestor that ISDH will review its records, and then forwarding the request to the public records coordinator.
5. All employees shall take training concerning public records every two years. New employees shall take training concerning public records within 30 days of hire.
6. Any denial shall be reviewed by an attorney in the Office of Legal Affairs before it is issued.
7. Assistant Commissioners and direct reports to the Chief of Staff or Commissioner shall appoint designees based on the needs of their areas and shall annually notify the public access coordinator of the name and contact information for the designees in his or her area. Assistant Commissioners and direct reports shall also notify the public access records coordinator whenever there is a change in designee in his or her area.

**Failure to comply with requirements of this policy may subject the employee to discipline.**

**RELATED POLICIES:**

Media Policy (ISDH-OSC-010-97)

**LEGAL REFERENCES:**

IC 5-14-3

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

**April 21, 2004**

**REVISED DATES:**

**September 21, 2005**

**September 22, 2008**


**December 15, 2008**

**June 15, 2012**

**April 30, 2013**

**June 6, 2016**

**APPROVAL:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Jerome M. Adams, M.D., M.P.H.**  
**State Health Commissioner**