

Thurston County Fire Protection District 8

DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL



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| <i>POLICY TITLE:</i> | Public Access to District Records |
| <i>POLICY NUMBER:</i> | 1-20 |
| <i>REVISION:</i> | 3 |
| <i>DATE ISSUED/REVISED:</i> | 13 February 2024 |
| <i>BOARD APPROVAL:</i> | |

1. The District is committed to providing the public full access to public records in accordance with the Washington State Public Records Act ("PRA"), referenced in RCW Chapter 42.56 and the Model Rules of WAC 44-14. The purpose of the PRA is to provide the public with full access to records concerning the conduct of government, mindful of individual privacy rights and the desirability of the efficient administration of government.
2. This Policy establishes the procedures the District will follow to provide for the fullest assistance to requestors including the timeliest possible action on requests, while protecting public records from damage and preventing "excessive interference with other essential agency functions." The District must also insure that its record disclosure policy and procedure protects against the invasion of an individual's right to privacy and restricts access to its records that are exempt from public disclosure.
3. The inspection and copying of District records must be conducted under the supervision of District personnel to protect the records. The District has a limited number of office personnel available to provide the required supervision. While the District will make every effort to provide prompt responses to record inspection and copying requests, the District cannot permit the response to record requests to unduly interrupt the normal operations of the District.
4. To ensure the protection of the District records and to prevent the improper disclosure of records, no District personnel shall have access to District records, without the approval of the District Records Retention Officer, unless their regular job duties require access. While District personnel shall have access to District records that they must use in the performance of their assigned duties, they shall not have access to confidential information that is exempt from disclosure and which is not necessary for the performance of their duties. In the event personnel are afforded access to confidential records, they must not improperly use or disclose the information or records.
5. This Policy shall apply to members of the public and to all District personnel including officers, paid and volunteer employees, independent contractors who are retained by the District and Commissioners. Except where these guidelines are mandated by statute, the guidelines in this policy are discretionary and advisory only and shall not impose any affirmative duty on the District. The District reserves the right to apply and interpret this policy as it sees fit, and to revise or change the policy at any time.