

**Department of Water Resources
Guidelines for Access to Public Records
(Government Code Section 6253.4)**

The California Constitution and the California Public Records Act (Act) Government Code Section 6250-6276.48 et seq. guarantee the fundamental right of people to access information contained in state government records. The Department of Water Resources (Department) has established the following guidelines to ensure that members of the public fully understand and are afforded the opportunity to exercise their right to inspect and obtain copies of public records.

Public records in the physical custody of the Department that are not exempt from disclosure will be made available for inspection or copying as follows.

1. Any person may review public records of the Department at its headquarters location, District or Division offices during the weekdays and hours that these offices are regularly open for business. Public records will be available for inspection only at the office or location where they are regularly and routinely maintained. Persons interested in viewing or obtaining copies of public records are encouraged to make an appointment.
2. Any person who inspects records of the Department shall not destroy, mutilate, deface, alter or remove any such record or records from the location designated for inspection, but shall physically return the records in the same condition as when received. Public records in the possession of the Department may be inspected only in the presence of departmental personnel, except in those cases where the Director of the Department or his or her designee determines otherwise.
3. Requests for inspection or reproduction of public records should be placed in writing by the requester:
 - a) Via mail to: Department of Water Resources, Records Management Office, 1416 Ninth Street, Room 354, Sacramento, California 95814.
 - b) Via facsimile to: (916) 654-5506.
 - c) Via electronic mail to: pubrec@water.ca.gov.

4. The Department, to the extent reasonable under the circumstances, will provide assistance to a member of the public to make a focused and effective request that reasonably describes an identifiable record or records.
5. Within ten (10) days of receipt of a request for a copy of records, written notice will be provided to the requestor as to whether the Department has disclosable public records that are responsive to the request. Where unusual circumstances exist as specified in Government Code Section 6253(c), the Department may, by written notice to the requestor, extend the time for response. No time extension shall exceed fourteen (14) additional days.
6. The Department may decline to disclose any records that are exempt from disclosure under the Act. (See Gov. Code Section 6254, et seq.)
7. The Department will provide copies of any requested public records not exempt from disclosure upon receipt of payment of the following fees:
 - a) A fee of fifteen (15) cents per page will be assessed for the reproduction of letter or legal size paper records.
 - b) Fees for the reproduction of other records, including microfilm, will be assessed in the amount to recover the Department's direct costs of reproducing the records.
 - c) For records stored in an electronic format, the provisions of Government Code Section 6253.9, which authorizes the assessment of programming and computer services costs necessary to product the requested record(s), shall apply.

Where the Legislature has established a statutory fee for the reproduction of any given record, the statutory fee shall be charged. The Department may waive these fees if the costs of retrieval and duplication are less than the cost of processing the payment.

8. A copy of these guidelines shall be posted in a conspicuous public place at all Department offices. A copy of these guidelines shall be made available free of charge to any person requesting them.