

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Date Approved by WGRLS Board</u>
Open Records Request	5/25/2021

Purpose:

WGRLS and the Regional Board respect the Georgia Open Records Act. The purpose of this policy is to establish standards by which library staff can comply with the act, as well as expectations for the public.

Policy:

Under the Georgia Open Records Act, a person may make a request to review library documents, electronic records or security camera footage unless these are specifically exempted from disclosure under court order or specifically exempted under law.

By law, the Library has three business days to respond to any open records request. If the information cannot be produced in three business days, within three business days the requestor will be notified of the proposed date of production. Requests related to decentralized libraries will be forwarded to the appropriate county or city Open Records Officer. The WGRLS regional office will have a designated Open Records Officer who will remain up to date on exceptions to Georgia open records laws. This person will evaluate requested information before it is produced to make sure it does not contain exceptions to open records law.

When an Open Records Request is received, member library staff should provide the person with an Open Records Act Request Form. The person should complete the request form, providing as much detail as possible as to what they are requesting. It is recommended that the completed form be returned to staff and staff will email it to the Office Manager. Persons also have the option of emailing the form to the Office Manager themselves.

If security camera footage is requested:

1. Verify that the person's section of the form is complete.
2. Inform the person of charges associated with labor for retrieving the information.
3. Complete the staff section of the form.
4. Scan the form and email it to the Office Manager. Include Open Records Request in the title of the email, and your name and member library in the body of the email.
5. Inform the person that they will be contacted within three business days at the contact email address on the form.
6. Inform the person the requested information must be picked up from the regional library at 124 W Chandler Street, Carrollton, GA 30117. At that time the person must pay for retrieval costs in check or money order.

If documents are requested:

1. Verify that the person's form is complete.
2. Inform the person of charges associated with labor for retrieving the information. For print copies this will be \$1.00 for the first page, and .20 for each subsequent page.
3. Scan the form and email it to the Office Manager. Include "Open Records Request" in the title of the email, and your name and member library in the body of the email.
4. Inform the person that they will be contacted within three business days at the contact email address on the form.
5. The requested information must be picked up from the regional library at 124 W Chandler Street, Carrollton, GA 30117. At that time the person must pay for retrieval costs in check or money order.

Retrieval Costs

Under Georgia law an agency may impose a reasonable charge for the search, redaction, and production or copying cost of records responsive to an open records request. The time expenditure cost will be calculated by using the hourly salary of the lowest paid employee qualified to conduct the research of an open records request, with no charge for the first quarter hour of employee time expended. Each photocopy will be 10 cents per page. Other fees may apply for different types of media and formats, mailing costs, certified copies, or other reasonable administrative costs. In some instances, the requestor's agreement to pay costs or prepayment of costs may be required prior to the agency's search, retrieval, review or production of the requested records. Payments may be made by check or money order payable to the "West Georgia Regional Library System" with "Open Records Request" in the memo line. Please mail to the attention of the "Open Records Officer."