

Dallas Central Appraisal District

PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS

1. What types of records are subject to the Public Information Act?

Any information collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is subject to the Public Information Act. The format (paper, electronic, microfilm, etc.) of the record does not affect its status as a public record.

2. How do I make a public information request?

- The request must be submitted in writing by either paper, email, fax, or in person;
- Must be submitted to the Officer for Public Information; or
- Email requests must be sent to the Public Information Officer who will then notify the record holder.

Emailed requests must be sent to Openrecords@dcad.org.

3. What should I say in my public information request?

No "magic language" is required to trigger the Public Information Act, but you must:

- Identify the specific documents you would like to request.
 - If you request "all documents" the District will contact you to clarify the specific documents as this is considered a broad request and requires clarification.
- Identify the specific year(s) for which you would like documents.
- Clearly identify the property for which you would like to request documents:
 - Example, DCAD Account Number; or
 - Physical Address
 - If requesting data, clearly identify the data you are requesting.
- If you want to know if the DCAD has received your request by email, the District will comply with a "read receipt" from the Requestor verifying delivery.

NOTE: The District is not required to answer questions or conduct legal research but provide documents in response to requests. If you have questions, you should contact the appropriate DCAD Division to obtain information in response to your questions.

4. What type of information is available?

Any information or data that is in the control of the Appraisal District and that is readily available. Data that does not exist does not have to be produced as requested.

Below are examples of documents available through the DCAD. This list is not exhaustive, but only lists examples:

- Appraisal documents (state specific documents requested)
- Exemption documents
- Appraisal Review Board (ARB) documents
- Archived Certified Roll (1982 – 1999)

Examples of documents **not** provided by the District:

- Tax statements or other tax related documents. The DCAD does not assess or collect property taxes. You need to contact the appropriate taxing entity for tax documents.

Dallas County Tax Assessor/Collector's Website Link:

<http://www.dallascounty.org/department/tax/>

DCAD Website Link to Local Tax Offices:

<http://dallascad.org/Forms/TaxCollectionAgencies.pdf>

- Deeds – The DCAD does not produce deeds; you can contact the Dallas County Clerk's office for official copies of deeds. The DCAD does not perform deed research.

Dallas County Clerk's Website Link:

<http://www.dallascounty.org/department/countyclerk/countyclerk.php>

- Foreclosure Notices – contact the Dallas County Clerk's Office (see link above).
- Leins – contact the Dallas County Clerk's Office (see link above).

5. How long does the governmental body have to respond to my request for information?

The Act provides that a governmental body must respond promptly to a request for information of documents that is readily available in good faith and within a reasonable time period. The Appraisal District must respond to the requested information within ten (10) business days. If the District is unable to produce data within the ten (10) day period, the officer for public information must send you correspondence certifying that he is unable to do so and set a date and time when the records will be available to you.

6. What can the Appraisal District do if it is unclear about what information or document is being requested or that the scope of the information is unduly broad?

The District may ask the Requestor to clarify or narrow a request if the Appraisal District in good faith has determined that the request for information is unclear or that the scope of the information being asked is unduly broad.

Clarification stops the District's duty to respond until the clarification is received for the specific request.

7. What is the Appraisal District not required to do?

- Prepare new information in response to a request;
- Inform Requestor if the requested information comes into existence after the request is made
- Comply with a continuing request for information
- Prepare answers to questions or conduct legal research
- Compile or calculate statistics
- Copy information onto material provided by the Requestor

8. Can I inspect documents?

The District shall make the information available to the Requestor for inspection or copying during *normal business* hours, Monday through Friday on a mutually agreeable date.

- Requestor is only allowed to inspect and/or copy public information
- Requested copies shall be made by a District Employee
- Requestor is not allowed to remove an original public record from the District

9. How do I receive the open records documents when completed?

When you submit your request for documents, you can notify the District if you would like responsive documents mailed to you or if you would like to pick the documents up at the DCAD Customer Service Department.

- If you want documents mailed to you, **provide a valid mailing address** with your request
- If you want to pick documents up at the DCAD, **you will be notified when they are available for pick up** with payment due at the time of pick up

The District does not email or fax responsive documents to requests.

10. What is the general ability of the Appraisal District to charge for documents?

The Open Records Section of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) Cost Rules Administration administers the rules promulgated by the Attorney General to determine charges and methods for charging for copies of public information. These rules allow for the recovery for costs of materials, labor and overhead.

Below is a list for *general* charges associated with requests:

- 50 pages or fewer copies of paper records:
\$.10 per page + postage (if applicable)
- More than 50 pages of paper records:
\$.10 per page + Labor Charge (\$15 per hour) + Overhead Charge (calculated as a percentage on the labor total) + postage (if applicable)
- Charges may be assessed for a request requiring programming and/or manipulation of data as well as necessary computer time to process the request:
Programming Charge (\$28.50 per hour) + Overhead Charge (calculated as a percentage on the programming total) + postage (if applicable)

The District must provide the Requestor with a written itemized statement if the estimated charges will exceed \$40.

For a conclusive list of charges, you may access the OAG website link below:

<https://texasattorneygeneral.gov/og/charges-for-public-information>

11. When may a governmental body refuse to release the information I request?

If the information you request falls within one of the exceptions to disclosure found in the Public Information Act, the governmental body may refuse to release the information while it seeks an open records decision from the Attorney General. Unless the governmental body has a previous determination from a court or the Attorney General regarding the precise information requested, a governmental body cannot determine on its own to withhold information.