



# **POLICY AND PROCEDURE NO. 305a**

## **Media – Public Records**

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3 Pages

### **PUBLIC RECORDS:**

Public records are defined in clause Twenty-sixth of section seven of chapter four of the Massachusetts General Laws. The statutory language reads as follows: “Public records shall mean all books, papers, maps, photographs, recorded tapes, financial statements, statistical tabulations, or other documentary materials or data, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any officer or employee of any agency, executive office, department, board, commission, bureau, division or authority of the commonwealth, or of any political subdivision thereof, or of any authority established by the general court to serve a public purpose, unless such materials or data fall within the following exemptions in that they are:

- Specifically or by necessary implication exempted from disclosure by statute;
- Related solely to internal personnel rules and practices of the government unit, provided however, that such records shall be withheld only to the extent that proper performance of necessary governmental functions requires such withholding;
- Personnel and medical files or information; also any other materials or data relating to a specifically named individual, the disclosure of which may constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;
- Inter-agency or intra-agency memoranda or letters relating to policy positions being developed by the agency; but this subclause shall not apply to reasonably completed factual studies or reports on which the development of such policy positions has been or may be based;
- Notebooks and other materials prepared by an employee of the commonwealth which are personal to him and not maintained as part of the files of the governmental unit;
- Investigatory materials necessarily compiled out of the public view by law enforcement or other investigatory officials the disclosure of which materials would probably so prejudice the possibility of effective law enforcement that such disclosure would not be in the public interest;
- Trade secrets or commercial or financial information voluntarily provided to an agency for use in developing governmental policy and upon a promise of confidentiality; but this subclause shall not apply to information submitted as required by law or as a condition of receiving a governmental contract or other benefit;
- Proposals and bids to enter into any contract or agreement until the time for the opening of bids in the case of proposals or bids to be opened publicly, and until the time for the receipt of bids or proposals has expired in all other cases; and inter-agency or intra-agency communications made in connection with an evaluation process for reviewing

bids or proposals, prior to a decision to enter into negotiations with or to award a contract to, a particular person;

- Appraisals of real property acquired or to be acquired until (1) a final agreement is entered into; or (2) any litigation relative to such appraisal has been terminated; or (3) the time within which to commence such litigation has expired;
- The names and addresses of any persons contained in, or referred to in, any applications for any licenses to carry or possess firearms issued pursuant to chapter one hundred and forty or any firearms identification cards issued pursuant to said chapter one hundred and forty and the names and addresses on sales or transfers of any firearms, rifles, shotguns, or machine guns or ammunition therefor, as defined in said chapter one hundred and forty and the names and addresses on said licenses or cards;
- [ There is no subclause (k).]
- Questions and answers, scoring keys and sheets and other materials used to develop, administer or score a test, examination or assessment instrument; provided, however, that such materials are intended to be used for another test, examination or assessment instrument;
- Contracts for hospital or related health care services between (i) any hospital, clinic or other health care facility operated by a unit of state, county or municipal government and (ii) a health maintenance organization arrangement approved under chapter one hundred and seventy-six I, a nonprofit hospital service corporation or medical service corporation organized pursuant to chapter one hundred and seventy-six A and chapter one hundred and seventy-six B, respectively, a health insurance corporation licensed under chapter one hundred and seventy-five or any legal entity that is self insured and provides health care benefits to its employees.
- Records, including, but not limited to, blueprints, plans, policies, procedures and schematic drawings, which relate to internal layout and structural elements, security measures, emergency preparedness, threat or vulnerability assessments, or any other records relating to the security or safety of persons or buildings, structures, facilities, utilities, transportation or other infrastructure located within the commonwealth, the disclosure of which, in the reasonable judgment of the record custodian, subject to review by the supervisor of public records under subsection (b) of section 10 of chapter 66, is likely to jeopardize public safety.
- The home address and home telephone number of an employee of the judicial branch, an unelected employee of the general court, an agency, executive office, department, board, commission, bureau, division or authority of the commonwealth, or of a political subdivision thereof or of an authority established by the general court to serve a public purpose, in the custody of a government agency which maintains records identifying persons as falling within those categories; provided that the information may be disclosed to an employee organization under chapter 150E, a nonprofit organization for retired public employees under chapter 180, or a criminal justice agency as defined in section 167 of chapter 6.
- The name, home address and home telephone number of a family member of a commonwealth employee, contained in a record in the custody of a government agency

which maintains records identifying persons as falling within the categories listed in subclause (o).

- Adoption contact information and indices therefore of the adoption contact registry established by section 31 of chapter 46.[Subclause (r) of clause Twenty-sixth added by 2008, 176, Sec. 2 effective July 8, 2008.]
- Information and records acquired under chapter 18C by the office of the child advocate.
- [ Subclause (s) of clause Twenty-sixth added by 2008, 445, Sec. 1 effective March 30, 2009.]
- Trade secrets or confidential, competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information provided in the course of activities conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier under a license granted by the department of public utilities pursuant to section 1F of chapter 164, in the course of activities conducted as a municipal aggregator under section 134 of said chapter 164 or in the course of activities conducted by a cooperative consisting of governmental entities organized pursuant to section 136 of said chapter 164, when such governmental body, municipal aggregator or cooperative determines that such disclosure will adversely affect its ability to conduct business in relation to other entities making, selling or distributing electric power and energy; provided, however, that this subclause shall not exempt a public entity from disclosure required of a private entity so licensed.

Any person denied access to public records may pursue the remedy provided for in section ten of chapter sixty-six.”

[For more information of how to handle formal requests for public records, see the sub-section titled “Formal Public Records Requests” under “NON-ROUTINE INFORMATION” below.]

Per:

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Chief of Police

GJG/km