

RIO BLANCO COUNTY

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR COLORADO OPEN RECORDS ACT REQUESTS

PURPOSE: The following procedure ensures that any member of the public will be provided reasonable access to public records covered under CORA.

OFFICE OR DEPARTMENT(s)

RESPONSIBLE: Administration, Attorney

OFFICE OR DEPARTMENT(s) AFFECTED:

All except Sheriff's Office, Department of Human Services and Department of Public Health and Environment

INTRODUCTION:

The Colorado Open Records Act (CORA), C.R.S. 24-72-201 et seq. guarantees that the public has access to the records of government bodies at all levels in Colorado. Most records are public and open for inspection. Rio Blanco County's elected officials and department heads are the official custodians of records maintained within their respective offices and departments.

The following procedure covers all County Offices and Departments, except for the following: Sheriff's Office, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Public Health and Environment. The Sheriff's Office has its own policies and procedures governing open records and can be reached at (970) 878-9630 or visit their website at [Sheriff's Office Civil-Process and Records Request](#) for more information. Requests for Case Specific Human Services Cases should be directed to Human Services at (970) 878-9640. Requests for Department of Public Health and Environment records should be directed to Public Health at (970) 878-9520.

This document is subject to modifications to CORA, or other State Statutes, which shall supersede any conflicting provisions in this document.

Record requests will be responded to within three working days. When extenuating circumstances exist, the period shall be extended for an additional seven working days. Requestors will be notified of the need for an extension within the first three days.

Requesting Public Records

To request public records from a department or office covered by this policy, please submit your request utilizing the required electronic form located at: [Rio Blanco County Colorado Open Records Request](#) . Please include the following information in your request:

- Your name, telephone number, Email address or mailing information
- Organization represented (if any)
- Specific description of the document – dates, type of document, parties involved, etc. Broad, vague or voluminous requests may cause delays in producing the records
- County Department or Office, if known

Reviewing Public Records

You may review public documents or request copies of documents available from Rio Blanco County. If you ask to review original documents, we may request that you follow certain procedures to protect the integrity of the public record.

For example, you may:

- Be supervised by a county employee within the area where the records are stored and/or maintained;
- Need to review records in a designated area
- Be asked to schedule for a particular time of day in order to not unduly disrupt the day-to-day activities of that specific office or department.

Please note: Records that are prohibited from disclosure under CORA or other statute(s) cannot be made available to the public. Rio Blanco County may also hold certain private and /or financial information about individuals that will not be released except upon the approval of that individual.

Fees

Rio Blanco County seeks to meet public information requests in the most economical way possible. Any fees charged by Rio Blanco County will be consistent with the provisions of CORA. The nature of the request will dictate any potential fees or costs. Costs for standard photocopies will not exceed the limit set by CORA (currently \$.25 per page) unless actual costs exceed that amount.

For Departments and Offices covered by this policy, the following is our practice regarding fees beyond photocopies. If a specific request requires a substantial devotion of staff time, for the purposes of researching, retrieving records, redacting records, or supervising the physical inspection of original documents, then a fee of \$33.58 per hour may be charged to the requesting party. For the purposes of this document, “substantial devotion of staff time” shall mean more than one hour, and said fee shall not begin to accrue until after the first hour of staff time. If manipulation of data is necessary to produce a record or document in a form not normally used by the County, the County will charge the actual cost to manipulate the data and generate the record or document. Such data manipulation may not be required under CORA but may be provided voluntarily by the County to assist in satisfying a request.

Requesting parties will be notified of the estimated fees and costs, and said fees and costs should be collected from the requesting party before any such costs are incurred by the County. Only actual costs will be charged, and if the estimate exceeded the actual expense of filling the request, the excess will be refunded to the requestor.