

FOIA REQUESTS

Making a Request

All requests for records must be made in writing, and submitting it to the Administrator in one of the following ways:

- Mail your request to P.O. Box 1565, Summerville, SC 29484
- Emailing your request to csr@dcwaonline.com
- Hand delivering it to 967 Orangeburg Rd., Summerville, SC 29483

DCWA's Response to FOIA Requests

Upon written request for records, DCWA shall, within ten (10) days (excepting Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays) of the receipt of the request, notify the person making the request of its determination and the reason(s) for making the determination; provided, however, if the record is more than twenty-four (24) months old at the date the request is made, twenty (20) days (excepting Saturdays, Sundays and legal public holidays) of the receipt is allowed to make this notification. This determination must constitute the final opinion of DCWA as to the public availability of the requested public record; however, the determination is not required to include a final decision or express an opinion as to whether specific portions of the documents or information may be subject to redaction according to exemptions provided for by Section 30-4-40 of the South Carolina Code of Ordinances or other state or federal laws.

If the request is granted, the record will be furnished or made available for inspection or copying no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date on which the final determination was provided, unless the record is more than twenty-four (24) months old, in which case the record will be furnished or made available for inspection or copying no later than thirty-five (35) calendar days from the date on which the final determination was provided.

If written notification of the determination by DCWA as to the availability of the requested public record is neither mailed, electronically transmitted, nor personally delivered to the person requesting the document within the time set forth above, the request will be considered approved as to nonexempt records or information. Exemptions from disclosure as set forth in Section 30-4-40 of the South Carolina Code of Ordinances or other state or federal laws are not waived by DCWA's failure to respond as set forth above. The various response, determination, and production deadlines provided above are subject to extension by written mutual agreement of DCWA and the requesting party at issue, and this agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld.

Fees and Waivers

As stated in the State FOIA, public bodies may establish and collect reasonable fees not to exceed the actual cost of the research, retrieval, redaction and copying of records. DCWA has established fees to recover the direct cost associated with the actual costs, including administrative overhead costs.

Documents may be furnished when appropriate without charge or at a reduced rate where DCWA determines that waiver or reduction of fees is in the public interest because furnishing the information can be considered as primarily benefitting the general public. Fees may not be charged for examination and review to determine if the documents are subject to disclosure.

Fee Schedule:

- Administrative level staff conducting search and retrieving documents \$32/hr
- Technical and professional level staff conducting search and retrieving documents \$46/hr
- (Required) Management level staff review of documents and redacting records \$86/hr
- Legal and letter size copies by DCWA staff \$0.25/pg
- Legal and letter size copies by outside vendor Vendor Direct Charge
- Larger pages and engineering plan copies \$5/sht
- A deposit of 25% of the estimated total fee may be required prior to DCWA initiating any search, retrieval, redaction or copying of records

The full amount of the total cost must be paid at the time of the production of the request.

Records Format

Records shall be provided in the format in which they exist. If the person requesting the records desires the records in a different format and DCWA agrees and has the ability to produce the records in the desired format, DCWA may charge for the staff time required to modify and produce the records.

Exempt Records

Many DCWA records are accessible through a FOIA request, however, there are certain records that are not open to the general public. These are referred to as exempt records. Matters specifically exempt from disclosure are covered under the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 30-4-40.

Personal Information

Pursuant to the SC Family Privacy Protection Act, South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 30-2-50, a person or private entity shall not knowingly obtain or use personal information obtained from DCWA for commercial solicitation directed to any person in this State. A person knowingly violating the provisions of Section 30-2-50 is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars or imprisoned for a term not to exceed one year, or both.

FOIA REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

Name of Requestor: _____

Company: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Requested Information

(Please provide full and complete information about the records you wish to receive/review)

Use additional sheets if necessary.

How would you like to receive the records? (circle appropriate response(s))

Review in person Have records emailed Have hard copies mailed Pick up hard copies

By signing here, Requestor acknowledges having reviewed, understood and accepted
Dorchester County Water Authority's FOIA policy and associated terms and fees:

_____ Date: _____