



## PUBLIC RECORDS REQUESTS – AS SIMPLE AS 1, 2, 3

- 1) First, there are many records which are routinely requested which are exempt from the Public Records Policy. You can obtain these records merely by calling or stopping by the correct Department and paying the photocopy cost, which is currently 25¢ per page. Those records are:
  - a. **Assessor's Office.** All standard property assessment print-outs, copies of current real property inventory data records, and paper or electronic (CD) copies of tax lot or tax code maps (excluding a request for all tax lot map images).
  - b. **Board of Commissioners.** Copies of minutes, Board orders, ordinances and meeting tapes.
  - c. **Commission on Children and Families.** Routine requests for contracts, accountability reports, comprehensive plans, guidelines and reports, financial reports, meeting minutes and agendas.
  - d. **County Clerk.** All duly recorded documents, to include documents recorded in the Commissioners' Journal and documents found in the County Road Jackets, marriage and animal control licenses.
  - e. **County Counsel.** Copies of minutes, Board orders, ordinances and meeting tapes.
  - f. **Finance & Taxation.** All documents generated by the standard PIC system, including voter registration in electronic format and sales information, and tax account information.
  - g. **Human Resources.** Documents a) requested from employees which are Human Resources related; b) related to background checks; c) requested from governmental agencies for comparison or example information; or d) requested from candidates for employment.
  - h. **Juvenile.** All juvenile department records as they pertain to youth and families.
  - i. **Land Development Services.** Copies, faxes, photos or inspection of: a) building and septic permit applications, issued permits and plans; b) planning applications, final orders and ordinances; c) tax lot maps or GIS maps; and d) all or portions of County codes or ordinances.
  - j. **Sheriff's Office.** Traffic accident reports and Citizen Crime Reports when there are no suspects.

- 2) For all other documents, you will need to fill out a [Public Records Request Form](#) and either fax, e-mail or mail the form to the Custodian of the Records, Jan Greenhalgh, at 230 Strand, Room 331, St. Helens, OR 97051; 503.397.4322 (Office), 503.397.7243 (Fax), or [jan.greenhalgh@co.columbia.or.us](mailto:jan.greenhalgh@co.columbia.or.us).
- 3) The Custodian of Records will forward your request to the correct Department(s). The Department(s) will advise the Custodian of the estimated cost involved in responding to the request. (For the costs involved in a public records request, see [Fee Schedule](#)).
- 4) The Custodian of Records will contact you with the estimated cost, which must be paid before the County proceeds any further with your request. You can elect not to pay the estimated cost and withdraw your request.
- 5) Once the estimated cost has been paid by you, the Department will proceed to prepare the records for inspection and/or copying.
- 6) The Department will then send the records to the Custodian of Records, who will contact you to schedule a time for inspection of the records or to advise that the records can be picked up and advise you of the final cost involved in responding to your request. If the cost is more than the estimated cost you paid, you will be required to pay the balance before inspecting or picking up the records. If the final cost is less than the estimated cost, a refund will be made.
- 7) In some circumstances, your request may be denied because the records requested are exempt from disclosure under Oregon law. In that event, the Custodian of Records will forward a written denial of the request. This denial can be appealed to the District Attorney for reconsideration by using the [Appeal Form](#).

The official policy adopted by the Columbia County Board of Commissioners can be found at [Public Records Policy](#).