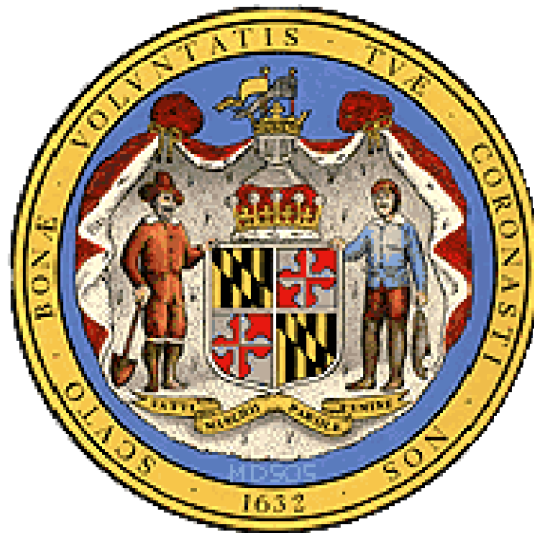


Maryland Public Information Act Manual



Office of the Attorney General

**Anthony G. Brown
Attorney General**

Eighteenth Edition
2023

MARYLAND PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT MANUAL

OFFICE OF THE

MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL

ANTHONY G. BROWN
ATTORNEY GENERAL

200 Saint Paul Place
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

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PREFACE

The Maryland Public Information Act is based on the enduring principle that public knowledge of government activities is critical to the functioning of a democratic society; that a Government of the people, by the people, and for the people must be *open* to the people. Members of the public need and deserve complete information as they make the decisions and form the opinions that determine our future path, and the Act ensures that those needs are met fairly and expeditiously while protecting important privacy rights and other public policy goals.

As Attorney General, I am committed to open access to information, and to promoting a consistent application of the Act throughout State and local government. The Office of the Attorney General has long worked toward ensuring the correct implementation of the Act, and I am continuing and expanding on that tradition.

This manual is designed to be a resource for a range of users, from members of the public and the media who request information, to the government officials who have the responsibility to implement the Act's requirements.

The 18th edition of this manual, like those that precede it, is the work of many talented and committed individuals from the Office of the Attorney General. Special credit goes to former Deputy Attorney General, later Judge, Dennis M. Sweeney for preparing the first several editions, and to former Assistant Attorneys General Jack Schwartz and Robert N. McDonald (now Judge McDonald), as well as to Assistant Attorney General Adam D. Snyder, who assumed responsibility for subsequent editions. This most recent edition has been produced under the supervision of Patrick B. Hughes, the current Chief Counsel for Opinions & Advice, with assistance from Sara Klemm, Assistant Attorney General for the Public Access Ombudsman and Public Information Act Compliance Board.

I also wish to thank the local government officials, the Public Access Ombudsman, members of the private bar, and representatives of the media and open-government advocacy groups for their many constructive suggestions about how best to implement the PIA.

In addition to being available in printed version, the Manual is on-line at <http://www.oag.state.md.us/Opengov/pia.htm>.

Please let me know if you have suggestions for further refinements.

*Anthony G. Brown
Attorney General
October 2023*

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Chapter 1: Scope and Agency Responsibilities

A. Origin 1-1
 1. Relation to Common Law 1-1
 2. Relation to Public Records Statutes of Other Jurisdictions 1-2
B. Scope of the PIA 1-3
 1. Public Agencies and Officials Covered 1-3
 2. Records Covered 1-5
C. Role of the Custodian and Official Custodian 1-9

Chapter 2: Right of Access to Records

A. Right to Inspect Records 2-1
B. Governmental Agency’s Access to Records 2-4
C. Scope of Search 2-5

Chapter 3: Exceptions to Disclosure

A. Exceptions Based on Other Sources of Law 3-2
 1. State Statutes 3-2
 2. Federal Statutes 3-3
 3. Court Rules 3-4
 4. Privileges 3-5
 5. Local Ordinances and Agency Regulations 3-8
B. Required Denials — Specific Records 3-9
 1. Adoption and Welfare Records 3-10
 2. Library Circulation Records 3-10
 3. Letters of Reference 3-10
 4. Personnel Records 3-11
 5. Retirement Records 3-15
 6. Student Records 3-16
 7. Police Reports Sought for Marketing Legal Services 3-17
 8. Arrest Warrants 3-17
 9. Motor Vehicle Administration Records 3-17
 10. RBC Records Filed With Insurance Commissioner 3-18
 11. Miscellaneous Records 3-19
C. Required Denials — Specific Information 3-20
 1. Medical, Psychological, and Sociological Data 3-20
 2. Home Addresses and Phone Numbers of Public Employees 3-21

Table of Contents

3. Occupational and Professional Licensing Records	3-22
4. Trade Secrets; Confidential Business and Financial Information.....	3-24
5. Records of an Individual Person’s Finances	3-29
6. Records Containing Investigatory Procurement Information	3-31
7. Names and Addresses of Senior Center Enrollees.....	3-32
8. Distribution Lists.....	3-32
9. Miscellaneous Information	3-32
D. Discretionary Exceptions.....	3-33
1. Inter- and Intra-Agency Memoranda and Letters	3-35
2. Testing Data	3-39
3. Research Projects	3-39
4. Inventions Owned by Higher Education Institutions.....	3-39
5. Certain Proprietary Information Owned by the Maryland Technology Development Corporation or Senior Higher Education Institutions.....	3-40
6. Real Estate Appraisals.....	3-40
7. Location of Plants, Animals, or Property.....	3-40
8. Investigatory Records.....	3-40
9. Records Relating to Public Security	3-46
10. Competitive Position of the Port	3-49
11. Global Campus – Competitive Services	3-49
12. Public Institutions of Higher Education – Personal Information.....	3-50
13. Records of Certain 911 Communications	3-50
E. Special Court Orders — Preventing Disclosure Where No Exception Applies.....	3-51
F. Inspection of “Any Part” of the Record that Is Not Exempt	3-53
G. Relationship of Exceptions to Discovery	3-54
H. Reverse PIA Actions.....	3-57

Chapter 4: Request Procedures

A. Written Request	4-1
B. Submitting the Request.....	4-2
C. Time for Response.....	4-3
D. Inspection.....	4-5
E. Records Not in Custodian’s Custody or Control.....	4-6
F. Written Denial	4-6
G. Judicial Records.....	4-6

Chapter 5: Judicial Review and Alternative Dispute Resolutions

A. Judicial Enforcement	5-1
1. Limitations.....	5-1

Table of Contents

2. Procedural Issues 5-1
 Venue..... 5-1
 Answer..... 5-2
 Expedited hearing..... 5-2
 Intervention 5-2

3. Agency Burden..... 5-2

B. Alternative Dispute Resolution 5-4
 1. Public Access Ombudsman..... 5-4
 2. State Public Information Act Compliance Board..... 5-6

C. Dispute Resolution for Judicial Records 5-11

Chapter 6: Copies

A. Right to Copies 6-1
B. Format..... 6-1
C. Format of Copies of Electronic Records 6-2
D. Judicial Records..... 6-4

Chapter 7: Fees

A. Search and Preparation Fees..... 7-1
B. Reasonable Fees for Copies..... 7-4
C. Flat Fees..... 7-4
D. Waiver of Fees..... 7-5
E. Fees for Judicial Records..... 7-10

Chapter 8: Penalties for Noncompliance

A. Liability of Agency..... 8-1
B. Liability of Persons Who Violate the Act 8-2
 1. Criminal Penalties 8-2
 2. Disciplinary Action 8-3
 3. Unlawful Disclosure or Use of Personal Records..... 8-3
 4. Disclosure of Certain Information to the Attorney General..... 8-4

Chapter 9: Research Access 9-1

Chapter 10: Judicial Records 10-1

Chapter 11: The Right to Correction or Amendment of Public Records 11-1
 A. Agency Responsibility..... 11-1

Table of Contents

B. Enforcement..... 11-1
C. Regulations 11-2

Chapter 12: Restrictions on the Creation and Collection of Personal Records 12-1

APPENDICES

A. Sample Request Letter A-1
B. Sample 10-Day Letter (or E-Mail)..... B-1
C. Sample Denial Letter C-1
D. Sample Indigency Affidavit..... D-1
E. Text of Public Information Act..... E-1
F. Model Regulations on Public Information Act..... F-1
G. List of Attorney General Opinions G-1
H. Responding to Requests Under the Maryland Public Act: A Suggested Process..... H-1
I. Access to Government Records Under the Public Information Act..... I-1
J. List of State, County, and Municipal PIA Contacts..... J-1