

Geauga County Public Library  
Operating Policy Manual

Section: Public Records  
Number: 370  
Effective Date: April 19, 2022

The Geauga County Public Library System, like other public entities in the State of Ohio, must retain records from year to year. The Board of Trustees of the Geauga County Public Library has created a Records Commission according to guidelines set forth in Ohio Revised Code 149.411. The function of the commission is to review applications for one-time disposal of obsolete records and schedules of records retention.

Records shall fall into two categories: Permanent and Non-Permanent. Retention of records may be in any commercially viable media that provides an accurate reproduction of the record. The following list shows the retention period of specific records, which is compiled from recommendations of the State Auditor's office and the Ohio Historical Society.

Geauga County Public Library shall comply with Ohio Revised Code Section 149.43 entitled "Availability of Public Records for Inspection and Copying" as that statute is amended from time to time. Ohio Revised Code Section 149.43 generally provides that all public records be promptly prepared and made available for inspection to any person at all reasonable times during regular business hours.

Requests for inspection of any public record kept by the Geauga County Public Library shall be addressed by the Director or, in the Director's absence, the Fiscal Officer or Assistant Director. It is preferred that such requests be in writing, although a written request is not mandatory. No employee is authorized to make available for inspection any record except in accordance with this policy, or as required by law. Records are not permitted to leave library premises and will be viewed in the presence of an authorized staff member. Upon request, copies of the records are to be provided at the same cost per page as the library's public service photo copiers and full payment must be made in advance of receipt of copies of requested records. All requests for public records will be acknowledged in writing by the library.

By law, certain information including employee medical records, social security numbers, employee home addresses, and other information are not subject to disclosure. Requestors will be advised if any redactions are made. Any questions as to the exempt status of any record will be submitted to the Geauga County Prosecutor's Office. In such cases where a request is denied, the requestor will be provided with a written explanation as to why the request was disallowed, including legal authority. If a requestor makes an ambiguous or overly broad request, or if the request cannot reasonably be identified as what public records are requested, the request may be denied. The requestor will be informed and given the opportunity to revise the request.

If a request for public records includes personnel records, the current staff member(s) (and former staff whose address is obtainable) will be notified in writing within three business days of the request. This notification will include the name and address of the requester if available and a description of the records requested pertaining to that individual.

All requests will be handled at the Administrative Center located at 12701 Ravenwood Drive, Chardon, OH. Telephone or walk-in requests will be received during office hours (Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5:00 pm).

Those received by noon will receive an initial response by 5 p.m. of the same business day. Those received after noon will receive an initial response by noon of the next business day.

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Upon receipt of a mailed request an immediate response shall be made to the requester by mail or phone, stating the request has been received and is under review. The response shall also indicate that the requester will be contacted as soon as possible with further information.

The Director of the Library shall take steps to educate all Library employees of this policy and the Director is authorized and directed to implement procedures in furtherance of this policy. The Director shall provide a copy of this policy to the Fiscal Officer who has been designated the records custodian of the Library and is required to acknowledge receipt of this policy.

This policy is to be posted on the library website and displayed in conspicuous places within the Administrative Center and each library branch.

Revised April 19, 2022  
Revised January 21, 2014  
Approved by Auditor of State Records Manager December 10, 2013  
Approved by Ohio Historical Society November 26, 2013  
Approved by GCPL Records Commission November 19, 2013  
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Approved November 14, 1995