Dakota County Domestic Preparedness Committee

Public Data Requests

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Policy required by Minn. Stat. § 13.025, subd. 2.

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Introduction: Right to Access Public Data

Dakota County Domestic Preparedness Committee (referred to herein as "**we**" and "**us**") complies with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. Ch. 13, ("**MGDPA**") and Minn. Rules Ch. 1205 in reviewing and responding to all requests for public data or to create summary data.

The MGDPA presumes that all government data are public unless a state or federal law says the data are not public. "Government data" is a term that means all recorded information a government entity maintains, including paper, electronic (such as email), DVDs, photographs, etc.

The MGDPA also provides that we must keep all government data in a way that makes it easy for you, as a member of the public, to access public data. You have the right to look at (inspect), free of charge, public data that we keep. We are required to respond to requests for public data within a reasonable time but may need to review whether data contains information classified as not public. You also have the right to get copies of public data. The MGDPA allows us to charge for copies. You have the right to look at data, free of charge, before deciding to request copies.

How to Make a Data Request

To look at data or request copies of data that we maintain, you must submit a written request. You may make your request for data by sending an email to Thomas.olmsted@co.dakota.mn.us. While submitting a data request by email is preferred, you may also make the request by mail to the following address:

1590 Highway 55, Hastings, MN 55033

You may request data by using the data request form (**Appendix A**) and submitting it as described above by email or mail.

If you choose not to use the data request form, your written request should include:

- that you, as a member of the public, are making a request for data under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act;
- whether you would like to inspect the data, receive copies of the data, or both; and
- a clear description of the data you would like to inspect or have copied (be as specific as possible including subject matter, dates, etc.).

We cannot require you, as a member of the public, to identify yourself or explain the reason for your data request. However, depending on how you want us to process your public data request you may need to provide us with some personal information (for example, if you want us to mail you copies of data, you need to provide use with a mailing address). In addition, please keep in mind that if we do not understand your request and has no way to contact you, we will not be able to respond to your request.

NOTE: the name of a person making a public data request and the written request are public data.

How We Respond to a Data Request

Upon receiving your request, we will work to process it.

- We may ask questions or request additional information from you in order to better process your request.
- If we do not have any data, we will notify you in writing as soon as reasonably possible.
- If we have the data, but the data are not public, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and, upon your request, state in writing which specific law classifies the data as not public.
- If we have the data, and the data are public, we will respond to your request within a reasonable amount of time by doing one of the following:
    - arrange a date, time, and place for you to inspect the data free of charge if your request is to look at the data (inspection must occur at our offices during normal business hours and at a time when staff are available); or
    - provide you with copies of the data. You may choose to pick up your copies, or we will mail or email them to you. We will provide electronic copies (such as email, CD, etc.) upon request if we already have the data in electronic format.
    - Response time may be impacted by the size and/or complexity of your request and by the number of requests you make in a given period of time.

If you do not respond to a communication from us concerning your request—such as a request for clarification or request to arrange for an inspection or pay for copies—within ten (10) business days we will conclude that you no longer want the data and will consider your request closed.

Information about copy charges is on **page 7**. We will arrange for you to pre-pay for the copies.

If you do not understand some of the data (technical terminology, abbreviations, or acronyms), please let us know. We will give you an explanation if you ask.

The MGDPA does not require us to create or collect new data in response to a data request if we do not already have the data, or to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if we do not keep the data in that form or arrangement (for example, if the data you request are on paper only, we are not required to create electronic documents to respond to your request.) If we agree to create data in response to your request, we will work with you on the details of your request, including cost and response time.

The MGDPA does not require us to answer questions that do not constitute a request for data or is not a question about your data request.

Requests for Summary Data

Summary data are statistical records or reports derived from data on individuals, but in which individuals are not identified, and from which neither their identities nor any other characteristic that could uniquely identify an individual is ascertainable. The preparation of summary data is not a means to gain access to private or confidential data. We will provide summary data if you make your request in writing and pre-pay for the cost of creating the data. Upon receiving your written request for summary data – you may use the data request form (**Appendix A**) and provide information on the summary data you are requesting – we will respond with the summary data or general details about when the data will be ready and how much we will charge you within ten (10) business days.

[1] See, Minn. Rules 1205.0700.

Minnesota Government Data Practices Contacts

Responsible Authority

Thomas Olmsted
Emergency Manager
1590 Hwy 55 Hastings, MN 55033

Data Practices Compliance Official

Thomas Olmsted
Emergency Manager
1590 Hwy 55 Hastings, MN 55033

Copy Costs – Members of the Public

We may charge for copies of public government data. These charges are authorized under Minn. Stat.§ 13.03, subd. 3(c).

You must pre-pay for the copies before we will give them to you.

Multiple requests made within the same ten (10) business-day period will be treated as a single request for the purposes of calculating total copy costs.

If possible, and upon request, we will provide you with an estimation of the total cost of supplying copies.

For 100 or Fewer Paper Copies – 25 cents per page

100 or fewer pages of black and white, letter or legal-size paper copies cost 25¢ for a one-sided copy, or 50¢ for a two-sided copy.

Most Other Types of Copies – Actual cost

The charge for most other types of copies, when a charge is not set by statute or rule, is the actual cost of searching for and retrieving the data, and making the copies or electronically transmitting the data (e.g. sending the data by email).

In determining the actual cost of making copies, we may include employee time, the cost of the materials onto which we are copying the data (e.g., paper, CD, DVD, etc.), and mailing costs, if any. If your request is for copies of data that we cannot reproduce ourselves, we will charge you the actual cost we must pay an outside vendor for this service.

Appendix A: Data Request Form – Members of the Public

Date of request: _____

I am requesting access to data in the following way:

☐Inspection* ☐Copies** ☐Both inspection and copies

*Inspection is free and may be done during normal business hours.

**There may be a cost for copies of data. We may require that you pre-pay for copies.

These are the data I am requesting:
Describe the data you are requesting. Be as specific as possible (i.e., dates, types, names, projects, etc,).

Contact Information

Name:_____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

You are not legally required to provide any of the above contact information; however, if you want us to mail/email you copies of data, we will need some contact information. In addition, providing contact information may help us process your request. If we do not understand your request and need to get clarification from you, we will not be able to begin processing your request until you contact us.