

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM**

SECTION: Fiscal Affairs

NUMBER: 03.H.02

AREA: Records Management

SUBJECT: Open Records

1. PURPOSE

The University of Houston System (“the System”) is committed to compliance with the letter and the spirit of the Texas Public Information Act (“the Act”) ([Texas Government Code, Chapter 552](#)). The purpose of this administrative memorandum is to guide the System’s handling of and responses to requests for information under the Act.

2. POLICY

- 2.1. The Chancellor shall designate an agent to act as the public information officer/designee (PIO). The PIO shall coordinate responses to all public information act requests that the System receives.
- 2.2. The Office of the General Counsel is responsible for (1) ensuring compliance with the [Texas Public Information Act](#) and with the System’s public information policy, (2) responding to requests for public information as directed, and (3) providing legal support to the PIO.
- 2.3. Any university personnel receiving inquiries concerning disclosure of information should ask that the request be put in writing and directed to the System’s PIO. Requests for information should be sent to the PIO via mail, fax, e-mail, or in person. E-mailed requests for public information should be sent to publicinfo@uh.edu.
- 2.4. Public Information includes documentation pertaining to, arising from, or relating to, the operations of the policies, programs, services, or projects of the UH System and/or any of its universities (Public Information). Public Information includes documentation in any format, and includes correspondence. All information and records held by the System and its universities are public, unless they fall within a specific exception to the Act.
- 2.5. The Office of the General Counsel will determine whether the information is to be released, or whether it falls within an exception to the Act. If an exception is claimed, the Office of the General Counsel will request an opinion from the Attorney General of Texas. In most cases, the request for an opinion from the Attorney General must be made within 10 business days of receipt of the request, or the information is deemed public and may be subject to public disclosure.

- 2.6. The Office of the General Counsel in conjunction with the PIO will coordinate the release of any requested information, and determine appropriate charges to the requestor for duplication of records using guidelines of the Office of the Attorney General.
- 2.7. Pursuant to [Texas Government Code, Section 552.275](#), the System has established a time limit on the amount of time personnel of the System and/or its institutions are required to spend producing Public Information for inspection or duplication by a requestor, or providing copies of Public Information to a requestor without recovering its costs attributable to that personnel time. The time limit which has been established by the System shall be 36 hours per fiscal year. Requestors who exceed the 36 hour time limit will be required to pay costs attributable to cost of materials, overhead and personnel time regardless of whether the requestor intends to only inspect the documents. This section does not apply to those requestors exempt by [Texas Government Code, Section 552.275](#).
- 2.8. If System or University business is conducted on personal electronic devices, it should be transferred to the UH System server as soon as practicable because such information is subject to the Texas Public Information Act.
- 2.9. Failure to surrender information that constitutes Public Information to the Office of the General Counsel or the PIO within ten (10) business days of the date that the request is received by the PIO, is grounds for disciplinary action in addition to any other penalties provided by law.

3. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible Party: Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs and General Counsel

Review: Every five years

4. APPROVAL

Approved: Dona Cornell
Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs and General Counsel

Renu Khator
Chancellor

Date: 12/20/19

5. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES:

UH System Public Information Web Site:
<http://www.uh.edu/legal-affairs/general-counsel/texas-public-information/>
Texas Government Code Chapter 552 – Public Information