

POLICY & PROCEDURE

EVANSVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **OPEN RECORDS**

SCOPE: All Department Personnel
DISTRIBUTION: Policy & Procedure Manual

REFERENCE: WI State Statutes: 19.32(2), 19.34(1),
19.35

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INDEX AS: Open Records
Release of Information
Juvenile Records

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy & Procedure is to provide information on the proper procedures to release information collected by the Evansville Police Department to ensure compliance with the Wisconsin Open Records Law.

This Policy & Procedure consists of the following numbered sections:

- I. DEFINITIONS
- II. RELEASE OF INFORMATION BY PERMISSION OF CHIEF OF POLICE ONLY
- III. RECORDS ACCESSABILITY
- IV. AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS
- V. ASSOCIATED/APPLICABLE FEES

I. DEFINITIONS

RECORD: . 19.32(2) Wis. Stat. Record Defined: "Record" means any material on which written, drawn, printed, spoken, visual or electromagnetic information is recorded or preserved, regardless of physical form or characteristics, which has been created or is being kept by an authority.

"Record" includes, but is not limited to, handwritten, typed or printed pages, maps, charts, photographs, films, recordings, tapes (including computer tapes), computer

printouts and optical disks.

"Record" does not include drafts, notes, preliminary computations and like materials prepared for the originator's personal use or prepared by the originator in the name of a person for whom the originator is working; materials which are purely the personal property of the custodian and have no relation to his or her office; materials to which access is limited by copyright, patent or bequest; and published materials in the possession of an authority other than a public library which are available for sale, or which are available for inspection at a public library

COPY OF THE REPORT: A copy of the report that was generated after all the information which the law prohibits disclosure of and all the information which the law permits law enforcement to refuse disclosure of has been removed.

II. RELEASE OF INFORMATION BY CHIEF OF POLICE ONLY

- A. Since the Chief of Police bears the full responsibility for the lawful and orderly operation of the Department, any and all information will only be released by the Chief of Police or his/her authorized designee. When releasing information, the Evansville Police Department Release of Information Manual will be utilized as a guide.
- B. Furthermore, information relating to cases which may involve potential civil liability for the Department shall be withheld until prompt review and approval has been obtained from the Department legal counsel. If there is reason to believe a request involves information which concerns potential liability of the Department, the person making the request should be referred to the Chief of Police.
- C. It shall be the policy of the Department that absolutely no record, including but not limited to, official document(s) and/or report(s), handwritten documentation, or verbal information shall be released by anyone other than the Chief of Police or his/her designee. This includes but is not limited to adult, juveniles, driving records and criminal histories. Release by any personnel of this Department to any party without expressed permission of the Chief of Police is absolutely prohibited. The only exception is a request from another law enforcement agency. This policy shall apply to information release requests whether juvenile or adult.
- D. It shall also be the policy of the Department to follow guidelines for the release of records derived from the Department of Motor Vehicles to third parties as instructed by the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA); refer to General Order 10.07: DPPA.
- E. Juvenile Records
 - 1. A juvenile record may be released to the following:

- a) News media representatives who wish to obtain information for the purpose of reporting news without revealing the identity of the juvenile involved.
 - b) School district administrator of the school in which the juvenile attended.
 - c) Other law enforcement agencies for the purpose of investigation.
 - d) Social welfare agencies under contract from a county.
 - e) Victim witness coordinators.
 - f) Fire investigators under WI ss 165.55(15).
2. If a juvenile release form is signed, a juvenile record may be released to the following:
- a) Victims insurance companies for the purpose of seeking restitution.
 - b) The juvenile's attorney or guardian ad litem.
 - c) Records can be released to the parent, guardian, legal custodian or juvenile (age 14 or older) upon their request.
 - d) The victim of injury, loss or damage of a juvenile act, and only for the purpose to obtain restitution.
 - e) Juveniles waived into adult court.

III. RECORDS ACCESSABILITY

- A. Generally, the Evansville Police Department will accept release of information requests between the hours of 7:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. (Monday-Friday). The Request for Records form should be filled out (not mandatory) by the requestor or an employee taking the request, in an effort to assist the Department in locating the record in a prompt and efficient manner.

IV. AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS

- A. The Chief of Police is designated as the legal custodian of all departmental records. Inquiries about the availability of records may be made at police headquarters during regular office hours. When records are legally available for public inspection, copies may be provided at the City's current rate.

VI. ASSOCIATED/APPLICABLE FEES

- A. **Copy Fees.** Copies of documents/transcription fees will be charged at the rate of \$ 1.00 first page; \$0.25 per page thereafter. [See Sec. 19.35(3)(a), Wis. Stats.]. (City of Evansville Resolution #2017-02, Published January 25, 2017)
- B. **Copies of Photographs/Tapes, Etc.** Fees for photographs, C.D.'s, tapes, etc. will be charged. (C.D.'s \$5.00; DVD \$20.00) [See Sec. 19.35(3)(b), Wis. Stats.].
- C. **Location Costs.** Fees will be charged. [See Sec. 19.35(3)(c), Wis. Stats.].
- D. **Mailing and Shipping Fees.** Fees will be charged. [See sec. 1935.(3)(d), Wis. Stats.].
- E. **Waiver/Reduced Rate.** Waivers or reduced rates may be authorized at the Police Chief's discretion on a case-by-case basis. [See Sec. 19.35(3)(e), Wis. Stats.].
- F. **Prepayment.** The Department may require prepayment for any request that will result in anticipated charges of Five Dollars (\$5.00) or more. [See Sec. 19.35(3)(f), Wis. Stats. And *Hill v. Zimmerman*, 196 Wis. 2d 419, 538 N.W.2d 608 (Ct. App. 1995).
- G. **Adjustment of Fees.** All fees hereunder may be adjusted from time to time.

Scott McElroy
Chief of Police

This Policy & Procedure cancels and supersedes any and all previous written directives relative to the subject matter contained herein.

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