

DOCUMENT ACCESS POLICY

The Choctawhatchee, Pea and Yellow Rivers Watershed Management Authority (CPYRWMA), being a public agency of the State of Alabama, has a duty to provide access to all government records created by this agency except those records which are expressly forbidden by statute as shown in the **Code of Alabama 1975, Section 36-12-40**. The purpose of this document is to inform the general public regarding the access policy adopted by the Board of Directors of said agency and as a guide for agency staff members in handling requests for government records.

Procedures for Requesting Access to Records

- I. **Hours of access:** Members of the public will be provided access to records of the Choctawhatchee, Pea and Yellow Rivers Watershed Management Authority (CPYRWMA) records Monday through Friday (except holidays) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. except when the staff is away from the office for lunch, outside meetings or unavoidable occurrences such as illnesses.
- II. **Written request for access:** A written request must be furnished to the agency providing the date, time, and title of records to be accessed. The written request should be submitted to the agency at least three (3) days prior to said date. A request form will be available at the agency office at 400 Pell Ave., Collegeview Building, Troy, Alabama 36082.
- III. **Conditions for access:** Food items, drinks, and smoking are strictly prohibited in the records' area. Large bags, backpacks, and briefcases also cannot be brought into the records' area. These may be checked at the Secretary's desk in Room 129. All visitors must allow staff to inspect items in that person's possession upon his/her entering or leaving the records' area if requested to do so. Records are not to be removed from the records' area.
- IV. **Time limit for providing access to records:** Every effort will be made to make the records available within no more than seven (7) working days. In some cases, however, (limited staff, location of stored records, large volume of records requested), you may be asked to return at a later time or date to use the records. Additionally, every effort will be made to make records which were requested in person, rather than by written request, available within no more than seven (7) working days.
- V. **Denying access:** In accordance with State and Federal laws, some CPYRWMA records may not be open for public inspection. Any questions regarding whether or not a particular public record is restricted will be referred to the agency's attorney. Details about which CPYRWMA records are restricted may be obtained from Barbara Gibson.

Procedures for Requesting Copies of Records

- I. **Hours for obtaining copies of records:** Members of the public may obtain copies of governmental records of the CPYRWMA Monday through Friday (except holidays) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. except when the staff is away from the office for lunch, outside meetings, or unavoidable occurrences such as illnesses.
- II. **Written request for copies:** A written request must be furnished to the agency providing the title of records to be copied and the date needed. The written request should be submitted at least three (3) days prior to said date. A request form will be available at the agency office at 400 Pell Ave., Collegeview Bldg., Troy, Alabama 36082.
- III. **Conditions for copying records:** Food items, drinks, and smoking are strictly prohibited in the records' area. Large bags, backpacks, and briefcases also cannot be brought into the records' area. These may be checked at the Secretary's desk in Room 129. All visitors must allow staff to inspect items in that person's possession upon his/her entering or leaving the records' area if requested to do so.
- IV. **Time limit for copying records:** Every effort will be made to make the records available within no more than seven (7) working days. In some cases, however, (limited staff, location of stored records, large volume of records requested), you may be asked to return at a later time or date to copy the records. Additionally, every effort will be made to make records which were requested in person rather than by written request, available within no more than seven (7) working days.
- V. **Price of copies:** Copies of records will be available at twenty-five cents per one-sided page of not more than 8½ " by 14 ". For two-sided pages of not more than 8½ " by 14 ", the charge to duplicate both sides shall be 50 cents. Prices are based on actual expenses such as employees' time locating records, making copies, copy materials, and depreciation of copying equipment, etc. The agency reserves the right, at its discretion, to forego copying costs for project-related studies when required by appropriate parties involved in ongoing work for the agency. All payments shall be in cash or by money order. Actual postage costs will be charged for mailing copies.
- VI. **Access by fax or electronic format:** In addition to in-person requests for copies, the agency does not provide copies by fax. Only certain agency records are available in electronic format; therefore, electronic availability will be determined upon individual requests. A written request is required as stated in Paragraph II above. The cost for copying and mailing a CD will be \$6.00 each.
- VII. **Fragile records:** The agency is not required to furnish copies of fragile records if doing so would cause further damage to the records. Under these circumstances, the user will be asked to make a handwritten copy. Also, some documents will be unable to be duplicated due to size, etc.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC RECORDS

Choctawhatchee, Pea and Yellow Rivers Watershed Management Authority

400 Pell Ave., Collegeview Bldg.

Troy, AL 36082

(334) 670-3780 – Fax (334) 670-3785 – choctaw@troy.edu

Pursuant to the Code of Alabama 1975, Article 3, Inspection and Copying of Records, section 36-12-40m “Every citizen has a right to inspect and take a copy of any public writing of this state, except as otherwise expressly provided by statute.” Please read carefully before submitting your records requests or making inquiries. This form may be submitted in person, by facsimile, email, courier service or via USPS mail to the above address. Please refer to the agency’s *Document Access Policy* for information regarding terms and conditions for inspecting or copying records. In some cases, photo identification may be required when requesting records in order to determine legitimate inspection privileges and to safeguard privacy rights of citizens.

Your Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ Email _____

Purpose of Request _____

Requested date and time to access or obtain copies of records _____

Description of records requested. State whether you want to access the records or will require a copy of said records. Please be as specific as possible, using names, record title, function of record, record date, and any other information that you feel will expedite your request. Use additional pages if necessary.

Important – Your signature is required for processing as an acknowledgement and agreement of the conditions stated:

▶ Sign Here _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this *DOCUMENT ACCESS POLICY*, please contact:

Barbara Gibson
Access Officer
Choctawhatchee, Pea and Yellow Rivers
Watershed Management Authority
400 Pell Ave., Collegeview Bldg.
Troy, Alabama 36082
(334) 670-3780
choctaw@troy.edu

