

COMPLETING AN ONLINE OPRA RECORDS REQUEST

This form may be used to request access to government records electronically. What follows is assistance and instructions on helping you complete the form so that the records custodian will be able to promptly respond to your request.

Requestors are not required to use this OPRA request form; however, a written equivalent not containing the form requirements of N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(f) and N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(g) may be denied by a custodian.

Determine the Municipal Office, County Department or State Agency that has the record you are looking for.

It is very important that you have determined what record(s) you are seeking and that you have determined which office, department, or agency can help you. A records custodian can only respond to a request for specific records. A request to an incorrect office, department, or agency is not considered a valid request and OPRA rights would not apply.

PROVIDE CONTACT INFORMATION

To assist the custodian in fulfilling your request, we may need to contact you for additional information about the record(s) you are requesting, to advise you of any fees, to tell you when they will be available, or to advise you if the record(s) you request cannot be disclosed. The form has room for your name, address, phone number, or your e-mail address. Please fill in enough information so the agency custodian can contact you. If you do not provide enough information, your request may be denied. If you want us to contact you by phone, please put in your number and the best time to contact you during business hours.

Requestors may submit requests anonymously. A request submitted anonymously shall not be considered incomplete. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(f). If you elect not to identify yourself accurately or provide an accurate address, e-mail address, or telephone number, the custodian is not required to respond until you reappear before the custodian seeking a response to the original request. further, anonymous requestors are prohibited from filing a complaint with either the GRC or the Courts. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-6.

CONVICTED OF AN INDICTABLE OFFENSE

All requestors must certify that they have not been convicted of an indictable offence in New Jersey, any other state, or of the United States. If you have not been convicted, check “no”. if you have been convicted and you are requesting personal information, you may be required to provide information about your victim and their families before the request will be fulfilled. This includes anonymous requests for said information. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-2.2

DELIVERY OF INFORMATION

Please tell us how you would like us to send you the information. There will be an additional fee for the delivery service.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

You may be charged a prepayment or a deposit when a request for copies exceeds \$5.00. The custodian will contact you and advise you of any deposit requirements. You agree to pay the balance due upon delivery of the records. If there is a charge to provide copies or access to records, the custodian will contact you to arrange payment before the request is fulfilled.

RECORDS REQUEST INFORMATION

Please clearly identify the record(s) you are seeking. Be certain to include all information that may be necessary for the custodian to fulfill the request. Your request will not be considered complete, and the response period will not start until the custodian has enough information to fulfill the request. The applicable response time does not commence until the custodian of the records you are requesting receives the request, not another employee of the office. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(h). That employee must either forward the request to the appropriate custodian or direct you to the appropriate custodian.

Please remember that there is certain information that public agencies may not disclose. This has particular reference to personal information, information related to domestic security, and other records. Exceptions to disclosure can be found on pages 2 & 3 of the OPRA request form and under N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1.

The records custodian of the office, agency, or department from which you are requesting records will generally have seven (7) business days to respond, unless:

- 1) The requestor seeks “immediate access” records as outlined in N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5€; where the custodian must respond “immediately” disclosing responsive records not to exceed twenty-four (24) months old.
- 2) The requestor seeks information required to be disclosed by N.J.S.A 74:1A-3(b), where the custodian must respond disclosing the information within twenty-four (24) hours, or as soon as practical.
- 3) The requestor is seeking records for a “commercial purpose” as defined in N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1, where the response time frame is fourteen (14) business days, but the custodian shall notify the requestor of additional time within seven (7) business days. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(i). However, the response time frame can be reduced to seven (7) business days upon payment of no more than two times the cost to produce the responsive records.

- 4) The requestor is seeking records requiring for review for compliance with “Daniel’s Law” (N.J.S.A. 47:1B-1, et seq), where the response time frame is fourteen (14) business days, but the custodian shall notify the requestor of the additional time within seven (7) business days. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(i).
- 5) Fire district employing one or fewer fulltime employees serving as custodians may add seven (7) business days to the seven (7) or fourteen (14) business day response time frames.

RESPONSE TO YOUR RECORDS REQUEST

By law, the responding agency must notify you that it grants or denies a request for access to government records within the applicable response timeframe after the custodian received the request. If the record requested is in storage, the custodian will advise you within seven (7) or fourteen (14) business days after receipt of the request when the record can be made available and the estimated cost for reproduction within no more than twenty-one (21) business days from date of notification. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(i).

You may be denied access to a government record if your request would substantially disrupt agency operations, and the custodian is unable to reach a reasonable solution with you. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(g).

If the custodian is unable to comply with your request for access to a government record, they will indicate the specific bases for denial on the request form or other written correspondence and send it to you.

Except as otherwise provided by law or agreement with the requestor, if the custodian fails to respond to you in writing within seven (7) or fourteen (14) business days of receiving a request, the failure to respond is a deemed denial of your request. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(g); N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5(i).

CHALLENGING DENIAL OF ACCESS

If your request for access to a government record has been denied or unfilled within the seven (7) or fourteen (14) business days required by law, you have the right to challenge the decision by the responding agency to deny access. At your option, you may either:

- 1) Institute a proceeding in the Superior Court of New Jersey; or
- 2) File a complaint with the Government Records Council (GRC) by completing the Denial of Access Complaint Form.

All questions regarding complaints filed in Superior Court should be directed to the Court Clerk in your County. Questions regarding the GRC’s Denial of Access Complaint process can be directed to the GRC toll-free telephone number at 866-850-0511, by mail at P.O. Box

819, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, by email at Government.Records@dca.nj.gov , or at their website at www.state.nj.us/grc The Council can answer general inquiries about OPRA.

Before you submit an OPRA, did you look for the information online? The Township of Clinton would like to remind you of a few items

Property Taxes & Liens:

- <https://taxlookup.njtown.net/pmod4search.aspx?cc=10>
- Enter Block and Lot Number, or Enter the Address

Surveys: Surveys are documents that are privately obtained by the property owner for the purpose of their purchase or sale. These documents are not filed with Township. Sometimes if a property owner makes improvements to their homes, a survey may be submitted as part of their documentation for permits in the Building/ Construction Office or submitted to the Planning & Zoning Office for variance consideration. The office cannot look in every file for a survey. Try to identify a permit, project, or improvement period, so that staff can look in specific files to see if a survey exists.

Construction Permits: Open and closed construction permits can be found online at <https://www.sdlportal.com/> and then by searching the address. You will need to create an account, which is free, to access the information.

Zoning Maps: View the online zoning maps to review easements, historic zones, highland zones, open space.

- <https://clintontwpnj.gov/>
- Departments → Zoning

Public Sewers: Some areas of the Township are served by public sewers. For complete information on service areas, rates, and hookups, please contact the Clinton Township Sewerage Authority: <https://clintontwpnj.gov/sewer-home>

Public Water: The Town of Clinton, and **NOT** the Township of Clinton is the supplier of public water in those areas of the Township where it is available. Please contact the Town of Clinton for further information about service area, hookups, and rates: Phone Number: (908) 735-2265

Deeds: Search online or in person at the Hunterdon County Clerk's Office website for property deeds. <https://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/countyclerk.htm>

OPRA Requests are requests for records. Be specific about the records you are looking for in your request. We are not required to conduct a search. We are required only to retrieve the specific records.

- “Anything and everything for 123 Main Street” is not a valid request and will be denied.
- “Open & Closed Building permits and septic plans for 123 Main Street” is a valid request.

Reminders:

- Print clearly or type your request. If we cannot read your writing, we cannot get you the information.
- Sign the OPRA form in the appropriate place.
- Each individual township department may contact you with updates or to provide your requested documents.
- The township has seven (7) business days to respond to your OPRA request. If you do not receive any form of contact within seven (7) business days, please contact the Township at 908-735-8800. An extension of time may be needed based on scope of request. If so, a written notice will be made as part of the seven (7) day request.