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THE FLORIDA SENATE

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

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Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST POLICY

In coordination with the Office of the Senate President, the Public Records Manager processes public records requests submitted to the Florida Senate.

The applicable provisions of law governing public records of the Florida Senate are Art. 1, s. 24 of the Florida Constitution, s. 11.0431, F.S., and Senate Rule 1.48. Under Article 1, s. 24(c) of the Florida Constitution, each house of the Legislature is exclusively authorized to adopt rules governing the enforcement of the public records with respect to its own public records.

“Public record” means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by the legislative branch, *see* s.11.0431(4), F.S.

The Public Records Manager works to fulfill public records requests in a reasonable amount of time. In the event the request is foreseen to result in an extensive use of information technology resources or extensive clerical or supervisory assistance, an estimate for approval will be provided prior to processing the request.

Visit www.flsenate.gov for a range of documents and records including bills, committee documents, videos, journals and other publications. Most materials on the website are available in a printable and/or downloadable format. Certain Senate publications are available in hardcopy format through the Senate Document Center, 304 Capitol, (850) 487-5915.

Requestors seeking records that are available publicly will be referred to the Senate website. Legislative research requests will be referred to the State Archives of Florida, R.A. Gray Building, 500 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250, (850) 245-6600.

Submitting the Request

1. **Please submit all public records requests using one of the following:**
 - a. Email: publicrecordsrequests@flsenate.gov,
 - b. Mailing Address: The Florida Senate, Office of the General Counsel, Attn: Public Records, Suite 302 The Capitol, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100.
 - c. Phone Number: The Florida Senate, Office of the General Counsel, (850) 487-5237
2. Identifying information for the requestor and a reason for the public records request are not required. Submitting an email address and/or phone number is helpful in the event additional information or direction is needed. If the requestor is unable to pick up the records in person, a mailing address should be provided with the initial request.
3. Submitting specific search criteria such as keywords, names and date ranges is helpful when searching for responsive records.

WILTON SIMPSON
President of the Senate

AARON BEAN
President Pro Tempore

Processing the Request

1. The requestor will receive notification via email (or hardcopy) confirming that the request was received.
2. The Public Records Manager will work with the Senator, Senate Office or staff to search for responsive records.
3. The Public Records Manager will process and compile any responsive records.
4. The Office of the Senate General Counsel may review all responsive records requests for exempt information.
5. Responsive records will be released to the requestor.

Notification

When a public records request is submitted to the Senate regarding a Senator or Senate staff, the Public Records Manager will notify the respective parties involved. Upon notification of the request, the Senator or staff may be asked to conduct a search for any responsive records in their possession. The Senator or staff will receive a minimum notification of at least 24 hours prior to the release of responsive records. A copy of the records released will be provided to the Senator or staff upon request.

Search of Private Devices

There may be responsive records located on personal devices or personal accounts that are not maintained by the Senate. For this reason, Senators and staff will be asked to perform searches of personal devices and accounts for any responsive emails, documents or files whenever a request so warrants.

Extensive Use Fees

Most public records requests can be produced electronically and are able to be fulfilled without a charge. Senate Rule 1.48(5) allows a reasonable **special** service charge for public records requests that require an extensive use of Senate resources, which includes the labor cost of the employees providing the service.

Extensive Use is defined as any public records request that requires **more than two hours** of Senate resources to research, process and redact exempt information. For more information, please review the Senate's Extensive Use Fee Estimate Policy.