

PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

OF THE ALCOHOL, DRUG ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BOARD OF ERIE COUNTY

The public records policy of the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board of Erie County (ADAMHS) guides employees in making materials available to which the public is entitled by law. The ADAMHS Board's Public Records Policy and the Board's Records Retention appear in full on the Board's website at www.adamhserie.org and are available in a conspicuous place in the public office. The policy, summarized below, appears in full in the Board's Policies and Procedures Manual. Also, a copy of the most recent edition of the Ohio Sunshine Laws is also available on the Board's website.

DEFINING PUBLIC RECORDS

Records that document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, and other activities of the ADAMHS Board are public, unless they are exempt by law from disclosure. Public records laws apply to records in any format, including those that exist on paper, electronically, or on any other media.

PROCESSING REQUESTS

No specific language is required to make a request for public records. However, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the ADAMHS Board to identify, retrieve, and review the records. In processing the request, the ADAMHS Board does not have an obligation to create new records or perform a search or research for information in the ADAMHS Board's records. The ADAMHS Board may ask a requester to make the request in writing, may ask for the requester's identify, and may inquire about the intended use of the information requested, but may do so only after disclosing to the requester the written request is not mandatory, that the requester may decline to reveal the requester's identity or the intended use, and when a written request or disclosure of the identity or intended use would benefit the requester by enhancing the ability of the Adamhs Board to identify, locate, or deliver the public records south by the requester.

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC RECORDS

It is the goal of the ADAMHS Board to promptly answer (within three business days) all public records requests by informing the requester that their request was received, the approximate amount of time it may take to prepare their request, and by asking for any clarification regarding the request, if applicable.

INSPECTION OF PUBLIC RECORDS

Upon request by any person, all public records responsive to the request shall be promptly prepared and made available for inspection to the requester at all reasonable times during regular business hours.

COPIES AND PAYMENT OF PUBLIC RECORDS

Upon request by any person, the ADAMHS Board through its Records Manager shall make copies of the requested public records at cost and within a reasonable period of time.

HANDLING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Records in the form of e-mail, text messaging, sent or received via a hand-held communication device, are to be treated in the same fashion as records in other formats, such as paper or audiotape.

DEALING WITH DENIALS OR REDACTIONS

If the public record contains information that is exempt from the duty to permit public inspection or to a copy the public records, the ADAMHS Board shall make available all of the information within the public record that is not exempt. If request is denied, requester shall be provided with an explanation. If the initial request was provided in writing, the explanation also shall be provided to the requester in writing. If some portions of a record are public and other portions are exempt, the exempt portions may be redacted, and the rest must be released.

