

Florissant Fire Protection District

Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for processing and responding to Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) requests in accordance with state law and in a manner that promotes transparency, accountability, and efficient use of District resources.

Policy Overview

The Colorado Open Records Act (C.R.S. 24-72-201 et seq.) ensures that public records maintained by government entities, including special districts, are open for inspection by the public. The Florissant Fire Protection District ("the District") is committed to complying with CORA and providing timely access to non-exempt public records. All CORA requests must be submitted in writing to the district's designated CORA request email CORA@florissantfire.com. Verbal or informal requests will not be processed under this policy.

Timeline

- Requests received by 5:00 p.m. Monday–Friday are considered received that same day.
- Requests received after 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, on weekends, holidays, or during office closures are considered received on the next business day.
- The District will respond within three (3) business days unless the request is voluminous or requires clarification.
- An additional seven (7) business days may be taken for complex or voluminous requests, with written notice provided.
- The day a request is received is not counted in the response time. (C.R.S. § 2-4-108)
- If a request requires clarification or a deposit/payment, the response period is paused ("tolled") until resolved.

Clarifying or Narrowing Requests

Broad or vague requests may incur higher costs due to increased staff time. The district may contact the requestor to clarify or narrow the request. Requestors are encouraged to limit the scope by:

- Date range
- Specific email accounts
- Search terms

Requests must include the following:

- Full Name
- Organization (if applicable)
- Mailing Address
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Description of records requested

If narrowed, the requestor must resubmit the clarified request in writing. The statutory timeframe resets at that time. If the requestor declines to narrow the request, they will be advised of potential fees.

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Handling Repeated or Duplicative Requests

- The district may consolidate similar or duplicative requests submitted by the same or multiple requestors.
- Requests will be handled in the order received.
- Staff time will be managed to ensure core duties are not disrupted.
- In cases of high volume, the district may publish records on a public website to satisfy requests and refer requestors to that site.

Exempt Records

If disclosure is prohibited by court order, it is contrary to state or federal law or regulation, or the public interest, records are considered exempt.

Exempt records would include the following:

- Attorney-client privileged materials
- Work product for elected officials
- Personal communication unrelated to District business
- Proprietary business information or trade secrets
- Personnel files
- If records are withheld, the district will notify the requestor within the three-business day period and provide the reason for denial

Fees and Payment

Per C.R.S. 24-72-205(6) and 8 CCR 1505-12, Rule 4.3, the district may charge staff time exceeding one hour to research, retrieve, and redact records. Typically, most requests are completed within one hour and no applicable fees are incurred. A third-party contractor may be used under extraordinary circumstances, with prior approval from the requestor.

Fees:

- **Hourly Rate:** \$41.37/hour (after the first hour)
- **Certified Copies:** \$3.00 per page
- **Paper Copies:** \$0.25 per single-sided page (after 20 pages)
- **Payment Method:** Check only – no credit cards accepted

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If fees are anticipated:

- The district will provide a cost estimate.
- Work will not begin until:
 - The requester approves the estimate
 - A **50% deposit** is received

The final cost may be adjusted based on actual time. Payment must be made by check payable to:

Florissant Fire Protection District

ATTN: Finance – CORA Request
2606 US Highway 24
Florissant, CO 80816

Other Guidelines

- The district is only required to provide existing records; it is not required to create new documents or answer questions.
- Records are provided in their current format.
- Requests for future or recurring records must be submitted as separate requests.
- Related or similar requests may be consolidated for fee purposes.

Abandoned Requests

- If the District requests clarification or payment and receives no response within **10 business days**, the request will be closed.
- Records assembled but not picked up within **10 business days** will be considered abandoned. No refunds will be given.
- If a cost estimate is provided and payment is not received within **21 calendar days**, the request will be closed.
- Reopening a closed request will be treated as a new request.

Harassing or Abusive Requests

While the District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to comply with CORA, it is not obligated to respond to requests deemed harassing or abusive in nature.