

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT POLICY

300.1 Purpose

To assure access to records in the custody of public officials; to provide guidelines on availability of records; and to establish authority for carrying out the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3700 et. seq., Code of Virginia, including a uniform fee schedule for reproduction of requested documents.

300.2 Procedure

1. It is the policy of the County to facilitate public access to the official records of the County, to make such records available, and to respond to requests for access in a timely fashion pursuant to the Act.
2. The County Administrator shall designate a County Freedom of Information Officer to assist the public with requests for official records of the County.
3. Under normal circumstances Department Heads are authorized to grant requests received by their respective departments for official document inspection and/or copying by citizens. When requests are responded to by a Department Head, a copy of the request and the response shall be provided to the Freedom of Information Officer. Official records shall be open to inspection and/or copying during regular office hours of the County office/department having custody of them, unless the records are excluded from the Act's coverage.

In some cases, complicated or extensive requests may be made. In others, legal factors may need to be considered. Any request considered unusual, of a sensitive nature, or of uncertain legitimacy shall be forwarded immediately to the Freedom of Information Officer. The Freedom of Information Officer shall be responsible for coordinating with the County Administrator and requesting the County Attorney's legal advice and counsel whenever necessary.

4. Requests for official County records pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act must designate the record(s) with reasonable specificity. However, a specific reference to the Freedom of Information Act by the requestor is not necessary to invoke the time limits for response by the County.

Gloucester County
Board of Supervisors Policy
Gloucester, Virginia

Section: 300

Page 2 of 5

Supersedes: N/A

Effective Date: January 3, 2007

Title: Freedom of Information Act Policy

Authorized By: Board of Supervisors

When a request is received that is unclear or appears to be overly broad, the Freedom of Information Officer or Department Head is encouraged to make contact with the requestor to ascertain exactly what documents are being requested. This personal contact will serve to minimize search time by county personnel and save citizens time and cost in reviewing and receiving copies of public records.

The initial response to the request for records shall be provided within five (5) work days after receipt of the request and shall be one of the following:

- Making the records available in writing as requested;
- Advising the requestor in writing that the records are being withheld as permitted by the Act or other statute, including citations of the section(s) of the Code that exempt the records from disclosure, and identifying with reasonable particularity the volume and subject matter of the withheld records;
- Making only part of the requested records available and advising the requestor in writing that the remainder are being withheld and including the specific citations of the Code section(s) that exempt records from disclosure, identifying with reasonable particularity the subject matter of the withheld portions;
- Informing the requestor in writing that it is not practically possible to identify or collect the requested records within five (5) work days, and explaining why. If this response is made within five (5) work days, the County has an additional seven (7) work days to make one of the preceding three responses.

The County is not obligated to compile information or reports which are not in existence.

5. Charges

- a. Generally, when minimum search time is required, there will be no charge for the viewing only of an official document. When extensive search time is required to provide the document(s) for viewing, or when copies of such documents are requested, charges are based on reimbursement to the County for the cost of searching for and reproducing such documents. If the charges to search for and reproduce the documents are expected to exceed \$200.00, the County may require payment of the estimated costs in advance by

**Gloucester County
Board of Supervisors Policy
Gloucester, Virginia**

Section: 300

Page 3 of 5

Supersedes: N/A

Effective Date: January 3, 2007

Title: Freedom of Information Act Policy

Authorized By: Board of Supervisors

the requestor. If such advance payment is required, the time allowed for response stops running until the requestor responds.

- b. Requests to provide information and records in computerized formats (i.e. on diskettes, tapes) will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and charges will be calculated based on material and staff time costs.
- c. For documents or other requests not specifically listed in this section, the Department Head or Freedom of Information Officer shall calculate the charge based on the actual cost to the county of searching for and providing the document(s), including but not limited to any associated labor or administrative costs.
- d. Charges may be paid in cash or by check made payable to the Gloucester County Treasurer. A receipt (receipts may be obtained through the appropriate department or the Treasurer's Office) will be provided to the requestor.
- e. Current charges for the costs incurred in searching and copying official County records have been calculated based on the costs of labor, office machines, and material as follows:

| Printed Publications/Books/Documents Reproduced: | |
|---|---|
| Office Copy Reproduction: | Five (5) pages or fewer, no charge; \$0.25 per page thereafter. |
| Annual Budget | Proposed/adopted budgets available online at: www.gloucesterva.info Hardcopies \$0.25 per page |
| Board of Supervisor - Meeting Packet | Available online at: www.gloucesterva.info - Hard copies \$0.25 per pg |
| CIP | Hard copies \$0.25 per page |
| Comprehensive Annual Financial Report | Available online at: www.gloucesterva.info - Hard copies \$0.25 per pg |

Gloucester County
Board of Supervisors Policy
 Gloucester, Virginia

Section: 300

Page 4 of 5

Supersedes: N/A

Effective Date: January 3, 2007

Title: Freedom of Information Act Policy

Authorized By: Board of Supervisors

| | |
|--|---|
| Comprehensive Plan | Available from Planning Dept. \$25.00 |
| Erosion & Sediment Control Ordinance | Available online at: www.municode.com - Hard copies \$0.25 per page |
| Gloucester County Code | Available online at: www.municode.com - Hard copies \$0.25 per page |
| Gloucester Street Map | Available from Department of Information Technology. (See pricing below) |
| Land Book Information | Available online at: www.gloucesterva.info - Hard copies \$0.25 per pg. |
| Land Use (Map and Summary) | Available from Department of Information Technology. (See pricing below) |
| Six-Year Secondary Road Plan | Available online at: http://syip.virginiadot.org/projects/default.asp |
| Subdivision Ordinance | Available online at: www.municode.com - Hard copies \$0.25 per page |
| Water and Sewer Construction Standards | \$ 50.00 |
| Water and Sewer Utilities Strategic Plan | \$135.00 |
| Wetlands Ordinance | Available online at: www.municode.com - Hard copies \$0.25 per page |
| Zoning Ordinance | Available online at: www.municode.com - Hard copies \$0.25 per page |

**Gloucester County
Board of Supervisors Policy
Gloucester, Virginia**

Section: 300

Page 5 of 5

Supersedes: N/A

Effective Date: January 3, 2007

Title: Freedom of Information Act Policy

Authorized By: Board of Supervisors

| Map/Map Products/Plats/Plans* | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Map Book | \$ 20.00 |
| Monument books w/location map | \$ 25.00 |
| Street Maps - flat or folded 1"=4000' | \$ 2.00 |
| GIS Map* – 8 ½ x 11 (B&W) | \$ 1.00 |
| Zoning Map – 8 ½ x11 | \$ 1.00 |
| Zoning Map - 24x36 | \$ 10.00 |
| Census Tracts | \$ 20.00 |
| Magisterial Districts/Voter Precincts | \$ 20.00 |
| Zoning Map - 5' x 6' | \$ 80.00 |
| Station Map - 5' x 6' (2 parts) | \$160.00 |
| GIS DATA PRODUCT ("AS IS") | \$500.00 |

* From time to time GIS is requested to provide custom maps in color and in larger sizes. These custom maps are not required to be produced in response to a FOIA request, but depending on staff availability, GIS may be able to respond to such requests, charging for time and materials pursuant to a department fee schedule.