

# TEXAS PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT REQUEST TEMPLATE

[YOUR NAME]  
[YOUR STREET ADDRESS]  
[CITY, STATE ZIP CODE]  
[YOUR EMAIL]  
[YOUR PHONE]

[DATE]

[RECIPIENT – Choose appropriate office:]  
City Secretary's Office  
City of Waco  
P.O. Box 2570  
Waco, TX 76702

OR

McLennan County Clerk  
501 Washington Avenue  
Waco, TX 76701

RE: Public Information Act Request

Dear [City/County] Secretary:

Pursuant to the Texas Public Information Act (Government Code Chapter 552), I am requesting access to and copies of the following public records:

[BE SPECIFIC – Example requests below:]

## EXAMPLE 1 – Meeting Minutes:

All meeting minutes from Waco City Council meetings held between [START DATE] and [END DATE], including:

- Regular session minutes
- Work session minutes
- Any executive session minutes that are subject to public disclosure
- Audio or video recordings if minutes are not yet approved

## EXAMPLE 2 – Development Application:

All documents related to the application for [SPECIFIC PROJECT NAME] including:

- Initial application and all amendments
- Site plans and engineering drawings
- Environmental impact assessments
- Traffic impact studies
- Water usage projections and agreements
- Tax abatement proposals or agreements
- Correspondence between the developer and city staff

- Staff recommendations and analysis

EXAMPLE 3 - Communications:

All emails, letters, and written communications between [CITY DEPARTMENT] and [COMPANY/DEVELOPER NAME] from [START DATE] to [END DATE] regarding [SPECIFIC TOPIC].

EXAMPLE 4 - Financial Records:

All invoices, contracts, and payment records related to [SPECIFIC PROJECT/VENDOR] for fiscal year [YEAR].

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FORMAT PREFERENCE:

I would prefer to receive these records in [CHOOSE ONE]:

- ☐ Electronic format (PDF via email to [YOUR EMAIL])
- ☐ Paper copies (mailed to address above)
- ☐ Inspect records in person (please contact me to schedule)

COST ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

I understand that I may be charged for copies at the rate established by the city/county. If the estimated cost will exceed \$[AMOUNT - typically \$40-50], please contact me for approval before processing this request.

If any portion of this request is denied, please provide:

1. A written explanation citing the specific exception in Government Code Chapter 552
2. The name and contact information of the person who can be contacted regarding the denial

TIME REQUIREMENTS:

Under Texas law, you must respond to this request within 10 business days, either by:

1. Providing the requested information
2. Requesting an Attorney General opinion if you believe the information is exempt
3. Providing a cost estimate if charges will exceed \$40

FOLLOW-UP:

If you have any questions about this request, please contact me at [YOUR PHONE] or [YOUR EMAIL].

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

[YOUR SIGNATURE]  
[YOUR TYPED NAME]

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## IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT PIA REQUESTS:

### WHAT YOU CAN REQUEST:

- ✓ Meeting minutes and agendas
- ✓ Approved budgets and financial reports
- ✓ Development applications and permits
- ✓ Contracts and agreements
- ✓ Email correspondence (with limitations)
- ✓ Inspection reports
- ✓ Traffic studies, environmental assessments
- ✓ Salary information for government employees

### WHAT IS TYPICALLY EXEMPT:

- x Information related to pending litigation
- x Certain attorney-client communications
- x Some personnel records
- x Information that could compromise security
- x Trade secrets or proprietary information
- x Ongoing criminal investigations

### TIMELINE:

- Day 1: Submit request
- Day 10: Government must respond (provide records, request AG opinion, or give cost estimate)
- Day 11-20: If requesting AG opinion, you'll be notified
- 45+ days: If issue goes to Attorney General for determination

### COSTS:

- Standard charges:
  - \* Paper copies: \$0.10 per page
  - \* Certified copies: \$1.00 for first page, \$0.50 each additional
  - \* Electronic copies: Usually minimal or free
  - \* Staff time: May be charged for extensive requests (labor cost per hour)
  - \* Specialty formats (maps, plans): Actual reproduction cost

### TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL REQUESTS:

1. BE SPECIFIC: Vague requests like "all documents about data centers" will likely be denied as overly broad
2. INCLUDE DATE RANGES: "All documents from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024"
3. IDENTIFY DEPARTMENT/OFFICE: "From the Planning Department" or "From the City Manager's office"
4. USE PROPER NAMES: "Correspondence between City Manager Bradley Ford

and [Company Name]"

5. REASONABLE SCOPE: Don't request 10 years of emails – start with 6 months

6. FOLLOW UP: If no response in 10 days, send a polite follow-up email

7. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: If denied, you can:

- Request specific legal exemption cited
- File complaint with Attorney General
- Challenge denial in court (with attorney)

SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP EMAIL (after 10 business days):

Subject: Follow-up on PIA Request dated [DATE]

Dear [City/County] Secretary,

I submitted a Public Information Act request on [DATE] and have not yet received a response. Texas Government Code 552.221 requires a response within 10 business days.

Please confirm receipt of my request and provide an estimated date when I can expect the requested records or a response regarding their status.

Request details: [BRIEFLY RESTATE YOUR REQUEST]

Thank you,  
[YOUR NAME]  
[YOUR PHONE]

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#### RESOURCES:

Texas Attorney General Open Government Guide:  
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government>

Texas Government Code Chapter 552 (PIA):  
<https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.552.htm>

File a complaint about PIA denial:  
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/complaints>

For assistance:  
[contact@wacodatacenter.com](mailto:contact@wacodatacenter.com)  
[www.wacodatacenter.com](http://www.wacodatacenter.com)