Texas Public Information Act Request Template

Your Information

Field	Information
Name	[YOUR NAME]
Address	[YOUR STREET ADDRESS]
City, State ZIP	[CITY, STATE ZIP CODE]
Email	[YOUR EMAIL]
Phone	[YOUR PHONE]
Date	[DATE]

Recipient Information

Choose the appropriate office:

Option 1: City of Waco

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City Secretary's Office
City of Waco
P.O. Box 2570
Waco, TX 76702
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Option 2: McLennan County

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McLennan County Clerk
501 Washington Avenue
Waco, TX 76701
```

Request Letter Template

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 - Choose one of the examples below or create your own]

Example Requests

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]**.

Format Preference

I would prefer to receive these records in:

- • [ ] 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

Legal 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

Contact for 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]

Guide to Public Information Requests

What You Can Request

Category	Examples

Meeting Records	Minutes, agendas, recordings
Financial	Budgets, contracts, invoices, salary info
Development	Applications, permits, site plans
Studies	Traffic studies, environmental assessments
Correspondence	Emails, letters (with limitations)
Reports	Inspection reports, staff recommendations

What Is Typically Exempt

Category	Reason
Litigation	Information related to pending lawsuits
Attorney-Client	Certain privileged communications
Personnel	Some employee records
Security	Information that could compromise safety
Trade Secrets	Proprietary business information
Investigations	Ongoing criminal investigations

Timeline for PIA Requests

Day	Action
Day 1	Submit your 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

Standard Costs

Item	Cost
Paper copies	$0.10 per page
Certified copies	$1.00 first page, $0.50 each additional

Electronic copies	Usually minimal or free
Staff time	May be charged for extensive requests
Specialty formats	Actual reproduction cost (maps, plans)

Tips for Successful Requests

1. Be Specific

❌ "All documents about data centers"
✓ "All zoning variance applications for properties over 100 acres filed between Jan 1-Dec 31, 2024"

2. Include Date Ranges

Always specify: "All documents from **[START DATE]** to **[END DATE]**"

3. Identify Department/Office

Example: "From the Planning Department" or "From the City Manager's office"

4. Use Proper Names

Example: "Correspondence between City Manager Bradley Ford and [Company Name]"

5. Reasonable Scope

Don't request 10 years of emails - start with 6 months and expand if needed

6. Follow Up Promptly

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

(Use after 10 business days with no response)

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]

Additional Resources

Resource	Link
AG Open Government Guide	https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government
Texas PIA (Gov Code Ch 552)	https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/GV/htm/GV.552.htm
File PIA Complaint	https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/complaints
Get Assistance	plcmercenary@tuta.io
More Templates	www.wacodatacenter.com

Template provided by Waco Data Center Community Action
For more resources, visit www.wacodatacenter.com