Procedure Statement

The purpose of the procedure is to assist Texas A&M University-Texarkana employees with compliance in regard to the Texas Public Information Act and to provide procedures to be used for the management of public information requests and compilation of responses. This procedure must be read in conjunction with System Regulation 61.01.02, Public Information.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure complies with System Regulation 61.01.02, Public Information and establishes the procedures to be used in the receipt, referral, and response to public information requests.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL

1.1 The Texas Public Information Act designates the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of each system member as the Public Information Officer (PIO). The President/CEO of Texas A&M University-Texarkana has delegated the PIO responsibilities to the Director of University Compliance.

1.2 The Director of University Compliance will distribute public information requests to the appropriate colleges, departments or divisions for the purpose of gathering responsive information.

1.3 The Director of University Compliance will notify the President of requests that may have public relations significance.

2. RECEIPT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS

2.1 Manner of Receipt
2.1.1 No official format is required, but information must be requested in writing and contain requestor contact information.

2.1.2 A governmental body may not inquire into the purpose of a request.

2.1.3 All requests received directly by a department, by mail or hand delivery, shall be forwarded immediately upon receipt to the Director of University Compliance.

2.1.4 Requests made by electronic mail or facsimile transmission must be addressed directly to the Director of University Compliance. Departments receiving requests directly from the requestor by electronic mail or facsimile transmission should ask the requestor to resubmit the request to the Director of University Compliance.

3. RESPONSES TO PUBLIC INFORMATION REQUESTS

3.1 The PIO will distribute public information requests to the appropriate departments for the purpose of gathering responsive documents. Departments will provide responsive documents to the PIO within three (3) business days. If the three-day deadline cannot be met, the department will notify the PIO and request an extension.

3.1.1 Records shall be provided electronically (via e-mail, flash drive or CD) when possible;

3.1.2 If necessary to provide hard copies, copies should be single sided with staples removed;

3.1.3 No redactions shall be made to responsive documents, except as determined by attorney general decision or Texas Government Code, Chapter 552;

3.1.4 Responses to multiple items shall be sorted and identified per item;

3.1.5 Concerns regarding release of certain responsive items shall be noted and provided to the PIO with the response.

3.2 A response to a public information request includes responsive documents that exist at the time of a request

3.2.1 A governmental body is not required to create new documents in response to a request

3.2.2 A database, as it exists at the time of a request, is considered an existing document.

3.3 Responsive documents shall only be distributed by the PIO to the requester.

3.4 Charges will be assessed as described in System Regulation 61.01.02, Public Information.
3.4.1 The University does not charge for fewer than 50 copies.

3.4.2 Cost estimates will be provided if a request will cost more than $40 to process.

3.4.3 If a cost estimate is required, it must be provided to the requestor no later than 10 business days after a request is received.

3.4.4 Cost estimates should be determined by taking a sample section of the responsive information and multiplying the sample by the total number of sections or by completing the Public Information Cost Estimate Model template that can be accessed on the Attorney General of Texas website. Requestor is allowed to narrow the scope of the request upon receiving cost estimate.

3.4.5 Actual work should not be done until the requestor agrees to the cost estimate and makes a deposit when appropriate.

3.5 All decisions regarding withholding or releasing records will be made in accordance with System Regulation 61.01.02, Public Information.

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Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

- Tex. Gov't Code, Ch. 552
- Attorney General’s Public Information Act Handbook
- System Policy 61.01, Public Information Act Compliance
- System Regulation 61.01.02, Public Information

Contact Office

Director of University Compliance, (903) 334-6755

Approved:

Emily F. Cutter, Ph.D.  
President, Texas A&M University-Texarkana

[Signature]

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