

What Records Are Available?

Most records maintained by public entities are

open for inspection and/or copying by individuals. Commonly requested records include:

- ◆ Ordinances
- ◆ Resolutions
- ◆ Minutes from open meetings
- ◆ Salaries of public officials
- ◆ Budgets

Exceptions

The Kansas Open Records Act recognizes that some records contain information which is private in nature. For this reason, the Act lists a number of exceptions. Records which are closed for this reason may include:

- ◆ Personnel information of public employees;
- ◆ Medical treatment records;
- ◆ Records which are protected by the attorney-client privilege or the rules of evidence;
- ◆ Records containing personal information compiled for Census purposes;
- ◆ Notes and preliminary drafts;
- ◆ Criminal investigation records; and
- ◆ Several other specific records.

For a complete listing of exemptions. See K.S.A. 45-221.

How to Request a Record

- Step 1 -

Check with the records custodian to determine whether the information that you need is available. Please remember to be courteous and specific when requesting information so that the custodian will be able to serve you better. Each department of Chautauqua County government has designated a person as its records custodian.

-Step 2 -

You may be asked to submit your request for information in writing. The records custodian may have a prepared form for this purpose. Make sure your request is as specific as possible so that your request may be filled quickly and completely. The records custodian may ask detailed questions in order to fulfill your request accurately.

- Step 3 -

Most records will be produced within three business days from the time the request is received. If the request is denied, you will receive a written explanation for the delay or denial.

- Step 4 -

If you have any questions about your request, contact your local Freedom of Information Officer. Larry K. King, County Counselor (620) 725-5875

Fees

The Kansas Open Records Act authorizes public agencies to charge fees for providing access to or furnishing copies of public records. This fee may be requested in advance and may include:

- ◆ Cost of staff time required to make the information available.
- ◆ Cost of copying or reproducing the record.

Why would my Request be Denied?

Although every attempt will be made to provide the information requested, it is not always possible to fulfill the request. There are a number of reasons that a request may be denied:

- ◆ The specific record that was requested does not exist;
- ◆ The request was unclear and should be re-submitted with more detail;
- ◆ The record that was requested is closed to protect an important privacy interest (see the list of exceptions to the Kansas Open Records Act at K.S.A. 45-221).