



Office of Mental Health Freedom of Information Act Request Policies & Fee Schedule

- The South Carolina Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Office of Mental Health (OMH) Office of Public Information coordinates Freedom of Information Act requests/responses.
- Requests, other than those that may be made in person according to the statute ([section 30-4-30 \(D\)](#)), should be submitted in writing, in one of the following ways: e-mail, postal mail to PO Box 485, Columbia, 29201, or personal delivery to the visitors' desk of the State of South Carolina Health Campus at 400 Otarre Parkway, Cayce, 29033.
- OMH has provided a form to assist requesters in providing all necessary information when making a request; it *DOES NOT* require that this form be used to submit a request.
- OMH will provide a message of receipt for all FOIA requests.

OMH Requests for Clarification, Additional Information, etc.

- On occasion, OMH may require more information or clarification from a requestor in order to undertake a search for responsive materials. Requests for Clarification or Additional Information will be sent in writing.
- Should the requestor NOT provide the clarification or additional information to OMH within 10 business days, the Agency will consider the request withdrawn.
- However, if OMH has documents responsive to the request absent those needing clarification/information, it will provide that information.

ID Verification Requirement

For responsive materials that contain private information, OMH may require verification of identification before providing responsive documents to ensure employee confidentiality.

Fee Schedule

The OMH Office of Public Information will decide when fees will be waived or imposed. The Office of Public Information will waive fees for public record when it determines that waiver is in the public interest.

For requests that require a fee, the amount will be calculated according to the following guidelines:

- **Hard copy pages***
1-15 pages of material: FREE
16 + pages: 20¢ per page.
- **Employee Time (Research, Document Retrieval, Redaction, Copying/Scanning) ***
If the request requires approximately one hour or more of staff time, fees will be based on the actual cost of the search, retrieval, copying/scanning, and redaction (if necessary) of records. This hourly fee will be the hourly salary of the employee who has the necessary access and skill to fulfill the request.

*Fees for photocopying, employee time, and electronic storage devices are individual fees.

- **Electronic Data Storage Devices**

If the FOIA response requires the use of an electronic data storage device (e.g., USB drive, CD-ROM, etc.) the charge will be the actual cost associated with the device.

Deposits, Invoices & Payments

At the discretion of the OMH Office of Public Information, a deposit may be required before the research process begins. This is generally for requests that will require many hours of employee time. The deposit will be no more than 25% of the total estimated cost for providing the materials.

The OMH will provide an estimate of costs for FOIA requests requiring a fee to the requestor **before** proceeding to gather materials, as well as a deposit amount, where applicable.

If the requestor intends to pay the deposit/fee, they should opt to continue the request process in writing (e-mail is sufficient).

If the requestor does **not** opt to continue the process in writing within ten business days, the Agency will consider the request withdrawn.

OMH will proceed with gathering materials as soon as possible upon receipt of the deposit and will notify the requestor of the final response date.

OMH will provide a final, itemized invoice for the cost of responsive materials (minus the received deposit, if applicable) upon completion of research, copying, and redaction of the documents. Payment should be made to the address below.

Until further notice, checks and money orders for FOIA deposits and materials should be made payable to the **South Carolina Department of Mental Health**. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. Checks and money orders, along with a copy of the estimate/itemized invoice, should be mailed to the address below:

OMH Office of Public Information
PO Box 485
Columbia, SC 29202

Upon receipt of payment, OMH will provide the responsive material to the requestor as soon as possible.

FOIA Request funds are deposited to the account of the OMH division/component that provided the responsive material and staff time to respond to the request.

Reviewed & updated July 2025.

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