

POLICY ON ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS

This policy is promulgated pursuant to the Rhode Island Access to Public Records Act (“APRA”), GLRI § 38-2-1, et seq.

1. A **written request** must be submitted to **Gail Mance-Rios**, the agency’s Public Records Officer, at Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority (“RIHEAA”), 560 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, RI 02886 to inspect and/or copy any records of RIHEAA, provided that requests for public information available under R.I.G.L. section 42-35-2 or for other documents prepared for or readily available to the public need not be in writing. There is no requirement that a written request be made on a form established by the agency. Electronic requests will be accepted if addressed to the Public Records Officer at - info@riheaa.org.
2. Upon receipt of the request RIHEAA shall determine whether all or any part of the request seeks records which are not deemed public records under APRA.
3. RIHEAA shall respond to a request within ten (10) business days unless RIHEAA determines that for good cause more time is needed to respond in which event the response shall be made within twenty (20) days of receipt of the request. If RIHEAA determines that more than ten (10) business days is needed to respond to the request, it shall explain in writing to the requester the reasons for the need for additional time, for example because of the voluminous nature of the request, the number of pending requests, or the difficulty in searching /retrieving/copying the records.
4. If RIHEAA determines that the request seeks records which are not deemed “public records” under APRA, it shall notify the individual or entity requesting the records in writing that the request is being denied and the reasons for the denial. RIHEAA shall also notify the requester that he/she may appeal the denial to the agency’s chief executive officer in writing.
5. If RIHEAA determines that the records sought are public records, it shall, *upon request of the requester*, provide an estimate of the charges, including a detailed itemization of the search/retrieval costs.
6. If the records requested do not exist or are not within the agency’s custody and control, RIHEAA shall notify requester in writing that the agency does not have or maintain the requested records.
7. At the option of the requester, RIHEAA shall deliver copies of the records requested

electronically, by facsimile, or by mail, unless complying with the requester's method of transmittal would be unduly burdensome due to the volume of records requested or the costs incurred.

8. Persons requesting delivery of copies of public records shall be responsible for the actual costs of delivery. The following costs shall normally be charged:
 - \$.15 per photocopy on common/legal size paper.
 - \$15.00 per search/retrieval hour, no charge for the first hour.
 - For providing electronic records, no more than the actual reasonable cost of retrieval and delivery shall be charged.
9. In the event RIHEAA determines that any part of a record is not a public record and must be redacted the requester shall bear the cost of redaction since that is part of the retrieval process.
10. If the requester wishes to merely inspect records, he/she specify that in his/her request to the Public Records Officer and RIHEAA shall notify the requester in writing when and where such inspection may take place during normal business hours.