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BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS FOR ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Public Information Act Policy and Procedures

This policy is adopted by the Board of License Commissioners (the "Board") to ensure compliance with the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA), codified at Md. Code, General Provisions Article § 4-201 et seq. These rules and procedures are intended to protect public records and prevent unnecessary interference with official business, consistent with the principles outlined in the **Maryland Public Information Act Manual** published by the Office of the Attorney General.

I. Official Custodian and PIA Representative

The Board designates the **Executive Director and Administrator** as the official custodian of records. The Executive Director, or a designee, will serve as the Board's Public Information Act Representative to manage all PIA requests. The representative's contact information will be made publicly available on the Board's website within the Board's Rules and Regulations and in its office.

II. Submitting a Request

Requests for public records must be made through Anne Arundel County's online Case Management Portal, <https://www.aacounty.org/pia>, and should be as specific as possible to help the Board locate the records promptly.

- Requests should include the requester's full name, mailing address, email address, and phone number.
 - The request must clearly describe the specific records being sought. Providing a date range, names, license numbers, or other relevant details will expedite the process.
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III. Responding to Requests

The Board will respond to all requests in a timely manner, consistent with the requirements of the PIA.

- **Acknowledgement:** The Board will acknowledge receipt of the request within **10 business days** of receiving it.
 - **Timeframe for Response:** The Board will make a determination to grant or deny the request within **30 days** of receipt.
 - **Extension:** If a request requires a significant search, a large volume of records, or legal review, the Board may extend the response time for an additional **30 days** with the requester's consent. The requester will be notified of the reason for the delay and the estimated timeframe for the response.
 - **Proactive Disclosure:** The Board's current website content includes agendas, applications, transcripts, and recorded livestream videos of the Board's public hearings, and an interactive map showing the current active liquor licenses within Anne Arundel County.
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IV. Fees for Production

The Board may charge reasonable fees for the search, preparation, and reproduction of public records.

- **Search and Preparation Fees:** The first **two hours** of staff time spent searching for and preparing records are provided at no cost. After the first two hours, the Board may charge a reasonable fee based on the hourly salary of the employee performing the work.
 - **Reproduction Fees:** The Board may charge a fee of **\$0.50 per page** for black-and-white paper copies. For color copies or other media, the fee will be based on the actual cost of reproduction.
 - **Fee Waiver:** The Board may waive fees if the request is deemed to be in the public interest and the cost is not substantial.
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V. Denial of Requests

The Board will deny a request for a record only when permitted or required by law.

- **Required Denials:** The Board must deny requests for records that are confidential or privileged by law, such as certain personnel records, attorney-client privileged information, or records containing trade secrets.
 - **Discretionary Denials:** The Board may deny a request if disclosure would be contrary to the public interest, such as in the case of investigatory records or information related to a licensing examination.
 - **Notification of Denial:** If a request is denied, the Board will provide a written explanation, including the legal basis for the denial and information on how the requester can appeal the decision.
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VI. Place and Time of Inspection

Public records, when not provided electronically, will be made available for inspection during the Board's normal business hours at its principal office. The Board will make every effort to accommodate a requester's preference for the time and place of inspection, provided it does not unreasonably interfere with the Board's official business.

VII. Proactive Disclosure of Public Records

(MD General Provisions Code § 4-104(a) - Implicit)

The Board is dedicated to the proactive disclosure of public records that are available for inspection under the Public Information Act. To achieve this, the Board will make the following types of public records easily accessible on its official website. This is subject to county approval and technical capabilities.

The records to be disclosed online include:

Agendas: Agendas for all public hearings and meetings of the Board.

Applications: Publicly releasable parts of license applications.

Transcripts: Transcripts of public hearings.

Recorded Livestream Videos: Archived recordings of the Board's public hearings.

Interactive Map of Active Liquor Licenses: An interactive map showing current active liquor licenses within Anne Arundel County.

This list may be expanded as additional types of records become suitable for proactive online disclosure.