



## THE PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY OF THE ATHENS COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY

Ohio Revised Code 149.43 (E)(2)

### DEFINING AND ORGANIZING PUBLIC RECORDS

Records that document the work of the Athens County Port Authority are public unless they are exempt by law from disclosure. Public records laws apply to records in any format, including those that exist on paper, electronically (such as email), or on any other media. All Citizens are entitled to access the records of their government and it is the duty of the Athens County Port Authority to provide prompt inspection and copies of the public records of our office.

### MAKING RECORDS ACCESSIBLE

Public records are available for inspection during our regular business hours. Records must be provided promptly for inspection, and copies must be made available within a reasonable period.

### PROCESSING REQUESTS

It is the goal of the Athens County Port Authority that requests for public records be acknowledged in writing, or, if feasible, satisfied within three business days of the request.

All public records requests to the Athens County Port Authority may be mailed, emailed, or called into office using the contact information above. The person making the request has the right to remain anonymous if they so wish and do not need to indicate their motive for obtaining the public records. However, the person making the request must identify the requested records with sufficient clarity to allow our office to retrieve them. If a request is ambiguous or overly broad, the office may deny the request but must contact the requester for clarification. Our office will assist requesters in revising their requests by explaining how our office's records are organized and accessed.

### HANDLING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Electronic records are to be treated in the same manner as records in other formats. Email, text messages, and instant messages, for example, may be public records if their content documents the business of the office. Records transmitted to or from private email accounts to conduct public business are subject to disclosure, and all employees, board members, or other representatives of the Athens County Port Authority are required to retain them in accordance with applicable records retentions schedules.

### DEALING WITH DENIALS OR REDACTIONS

If our office withholds, redacts, or otherwise denies requested records, we must provide an explanation, including legal authority. If portions of a record are public and other portions are exempt, the exempt portions may be redacted while the rest are released. When making public records available for public inspection or copying, our office shall notify the requester of any redaction or make the redaction plainly visible.

### DETERMINING THE COPYING AND MAILING CHARGES

There is no charge to inspect public records, but copies of records are available at actual cost excluding labor. The charge for paper copies is \$0.05 per page. The charge for electronic files downloaded to a compact disc is \$1 per disc. The actual cost of postage, mailing supplies, or other delivery costs may be charged. There is no charge for emailed documents. It is permissible to require payment of all costs in advance of delivery. The requester may choose whether to have the record copied on paper, on the same medium in which the public record is kept, or on any other medium upon which the Athens County Port Authority office determines that the record can reasonably be duplicated.

### MANAGING RECORDS

The records of the Athens County Port Authority's Office are subject to records retention schedules of seven years from the date of creation. More information about Ohio's Sunshine Law requirements are available at the Ohio Attorney General's Office at: <https://ohioattorneygeneral.gov/mcc.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Files/Publications-Files>

### FAILURE TO RESPOND TO PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

If a requester feels that they have been improperly denied public records, the office shall advise the requester that they may contact the public office's senior representative, request a meeting be called with the County Prosecutor, or seek legal remedy as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code.

*A full version of the County's Public Records Policy may be obtained by 740-597-1420*