

# NEW CASTLE COUNTY

## PERSONNEL POLICY


NUMBER 4.15

PAGE 1 of 3

DATE 04/07/05

**SUBJECT:** DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

**APPROVED:**



**OBJECTIVE:** To establish a policy outlining the procedure for the collection of and response to requests from members of the media and/or the public.

### MEDIA POLICY

**Statement:** The County Executive has the responsibility for media communications relating to both the philosophy of the County and policy decisions affecting the County. The intent of this policy is to provide accurate information to the media upon request. In an effort to ensure that all dissemination of information is accurate, individual employees may not communicate directly with the media on County-related issues either verbally or in writing, without prior authorization from the department general manger, row officer, or designee.

#### Procedure:

1. Any requests from the media shall be directed to New Castle County's media office and/or the department general manager, row officer, or designee. The preferred method of requests for and dissemination of information shall be in writing; however, the final decision for the release of the requested information shall be at the discretion of the department general manager, row officer, or designee.
2. Any employee initiating contact with the media in an official capacity must have the content of such communication approved by the department general manager, row officer, or designee prior to its release. Cooperation on this matter will ensure that current and accurate information is being provided at all times.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT POLICY

**Statement:** New Castle County Government believes that public business should be performed in an open and public manner so that our citizens shall have the opportunity to observe the performance of public officials and to monitor the decisions that are made by such officials in formulating and executing public policy. To insure that citizens have access to public records, and to further the accountability of government to the citizens of this County, these procedures are hereby adopted:

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PAGE 2 of 3

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### TO THE APPLICANT:

1. PLEASE IDENTIFY THE SPECIFIC FILE OR RECORD YOU WISH TO INSPECT INCLUDING PERMIT NUMBER, RECORD PLAN NUMBER, TAX PARCEL NUMBER, OR ANY OTHER AVAILABLE INFORMATION YOU MAY HAVE and send your request to the attention of the appropriate department general manager, i.e., Community Services, Special Services, Land Use, etc., Freedom of Information Act Request, 87 Reads Way, Corporate Commons, New Castle, Delaware 19720. The request *MUST* adequately describe the record sought in sufficient detail, to enable the Department to locate the record requested. Please include any applicable identifying numbers (if known) and/or the site address where you believe the documents may be located. The Department will respond to your request within 10 business days except when:
  - (a) There is a need to search for and collect the requested records from field facilities or other establishments that are separate from the office processing the request;
  - (b) When there is a need to search for, collect, and examine a voluminous amount of separate and distinct records;
  - (c) When there is a need for consultation, which shall be conducted with a practicable speed, with another agency or agency counsel.
2. Appointments to request documents will be made during regular business hours. Viewing time ends at 4:00 p.m. with no exceptions. Appointments will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time for the applicant and the Department.
3. If, after inspection, copies are desired, the specific records must be identified by tabbing the pages. If the amount is less than 25 pages *and* the personnel are available, the copies will be made while you wait. If the amount is under 100 pages, the copies will be made at the Department's earliest convenience and mailed to the applicant. If the request is over 100 pages, the County will produce the records within 90 days.

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**PAGE** 3 of 3

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4. There will be a charge of \$.50 per page for 8½ x 11 copies plus any archive retrieval fees incurred. Documents, such as poster size plans, that we are not capable of reproducing, will be sent off-site to be copied and the costs incurred will be charged to the applicant. In addition to the per page charge, New Castle County reserves the right to assess administrative charges for the collection of data. This charge will reflect the personnel and equipment costs associated with a production request. If administrative charges are assessed, an itemized list of all charges will be provided. Please make the check or money order payable to "New Castle County." Payment must be received before information is released. There is a return check fee of \$50.
5. *Important Note:* Requests that do not adequately describe the document or file sought, or require the Department to do research not contemplated by the Freedom of Information Act, will be returned to the applicant. Any requests that are rejected will be returned with an explanation outlining why New Castle County Government did not provide a response.
6. If you do not receive a response within 10 days, please contact the Office of Law at (302)395-5130 pertaining to your Freedom of Information Act request.

**REQUIRED ACTION:** All New Castle County employees shall be responsible for the implementation of and compliance with the above-stated policy.

Revised: 03/24/99  
Revised: 04/01/03  
Revised: 03/22/05  
Revised: 04/07/05

# NEW CASTLE COUNTY'S FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PUBLIC DOCUMENT REQUEST FORM

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To The Applicant:

Please state with specificity the public documents you are seeking pursuant to this request in the space provided below:

Please provide a phone number and address where a response may be sent:

**I have read and understand New Castle County's Policy and Procedures regarding requests for public documents under the Freedom of Information Act.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

You may fax your request to: (contact the department for appropriate fax number)