



California State Controller's Office

Transparency in Government

Guidelines for Access to Public Records Maintained by the California State Controller's Office

The public has a right to access documents, publications and information produced by government agencies, including the State Controller's Office, subject to certain conditions. This access at the State Controller's Office is governed by the California Public Records Act (Government Code § 7920.000 et seq.).

The State Controller is committed to the timely and complete disclosure of information in accordance with the law, and furthermore believes that this right of public access is vital to the effective functioning of our representative system of government. Indeed, the California Public Records Act declares that "access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person in this state."

How can I obtain public records maintained by the State Controller's Office?

You may want to begin by checking out the Controller's public Web site, www.sco.ca.gov, which contains hundreds of pages of information about the programs, services and other business under the Controller's authority. For example, the site includes a [free search tool](#) for finding unclaimed property, as well as free electronic versions of many publications including [State financial reports and audits](#). In some cases, information is provided for ordering printed copies of Controller publications.

You may also want to contact the Controller's Office to receive copies of, or view, public records maintained by the Office. We encourage you to make your public records request in writing, and to describe the information you are seeking as specifically as possible. Staff members from the Controller's Office will contact you if they need more information to better understand or focus your request.

What happens after I make my request for public records?

Within 10 days of receiving your request for records, the Controller's Office will determine whether the records are subject to disclosure under the law and will promptly inform you of this determination. And, if there is a cost associated with the production of

the records, we will provide you with an estimated cost and when we can have the records ready for you. If the law prohibits or limits disclosure of the records sought, we will provide a specific explanation. The California Public Records Act provides for an extension of the initial 10-day period to respond to the request in some limited circumstances, such as when inspection of voluminous records is required.

Do I have to pay to see the records?

We generally charge 10 cents a page for paper copies of records, although this charge may be waived for requests of fewer than 50 pages and if you request fewer than \$10 in copies over a three-month period. This cost reflects only the direct cost of copying and not the staff persons' time for fulfilling the record request. In certain circumstances, such as when the Controller's Office must compile electronic data, you may be required to pay for the full costs of the records request.

Where do I send my request for records?

Mail or fax your public records request to:

Legal Office
Attn: Public Records Request
State Controller's Office
300 Capitol Mall, Suite 1850
Sacramento, CA 95814
(Fax) 916-322-1220

Additional Information

These guidelines are intended as a basic introduction to the public records request process at the State Controller's Office and are not a complete summary of the relevant laws. For more specific information, you may want to read the following:

- ▶ Summary of the California Public Records Act by the State Attorney General:
https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/publications/summary_public_records_act.pdf
- ▶ Text of the California Public Records Act (Government Code Section 7920.000 and following)
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayexpandedbranch.xhtml?tocCode=GOV&division=10.&title=1.&part=&chapter=&article=