



Town of Middlefield Board of Assessors

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How to Make a Public Records Request

Pursuant to The Massachusetts Public Records Law, (Massachusetts General Laws, {M.G.L.} Chapter 4, §7 (26), M.G.L. Chapter 66 §10, and code of Massachusetts Regulations 950 SN{R 32), the Middlefield Board of Assessors (BOA) has established the following policies regarding access to and inspection of its public records.

Records You May Request

Anyone can examine and/or request copies of any public record maintained by the BOA, *excluding* the following as per M.G.L. Chapter 4, § 7 (26):

- Material relating to a named individual, disclosure of which might constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy.
- Reports prepared in conjunction with ongoing litigation before the Appellate Tax Board.
- Personal notebooks and other materials prepared by members of the BOA, which are not maintained as part of the BOA files.

Making Your Request

It is advisable to put your request in writing, using the BOA [Public Records Request form](#).

While an oral request made in person (not by telephone) is valid under the Public Records Law, in order to appeal the custodian's failure to provide copies or access to records, your original request must be in writing.

How Your Request is Processed

All requests for public records will be honored in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law within ten calendar days. However, the BOA is not obligated to provide the requested documents in less than three working days, during which time the BOA staff will provide an estimate of the cost/fee to provide records in accordance with the original request. This is to assist the requester in determining whether to cancel or limit the extent of the request. Any denial of access to departmental records will detail the specific legal basis for withholding the requested materials in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law.

When Payment is Due

Payment for the research, compilation, and copying process is due on delivery, either in cash or by check payable to “Town of Middlefield”.

Processing Fees

The following fees may be charged for complying with a public records request in accordance with the Massachusetts Public Records Law:

- For search and segregation and/or pulling records and copying by the BOA \$12.50 per hour.
- Per page charges for standard single-sided copies are:
 - \$0.20 for 8½ x 11 sheets
 - \$0.50 for 11 x 17 sheets
 - \$0.50 for 8½ x 11 standard computer record printouts
- Time & materials for electronic files and computer records in other formats
- An outside source shall be used for requests for complete files or full-sized plans at the direct expense of the requestor, at the discretion of the BOA staff.
- For examination of records in the BOA office during regular hours, no charge unless additional search and segregation time is required by staff. Note: staff must be available to assist at the time of examination to ensure proper handling and protection of public records.
- Fees under one dollar are waved.

Satisfying your Request

Your request need not indicate specific documents, as long as you provide a reasonable description of the information you desire. If there are no existing records to satisfy your request, the BOA is not obligated to create a record for the requestor. The BOA, as the Custodian of Records, is authorized to determine whether or not a requested document is public record. Any person denied access to departmental records may appeal to the Supervisor of Public Records, Public Records Division, Office of the State Secretary, One Ashburton Place, Room 1719, Boston, MA 02108 (Phone: 617-727-2836).