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CALIFORNIA OFFICE OF HEALTH INFORMATION INTEGRITY

Guidelines for Access to Public Records: California Public Records Act

(Government Code sections 6250 *et seq.*)



The Public has a right to inspect and/or obtain copies of public records maintained by state and local agencies pursuant to the California Public Records Act (CPRA). While many records are accessible, the CPRA as well as other statutes, may protect (exempt) records from disclosure, including but not limited to: confidential records such as medical records; investigative records; private information about other people, such as foster families; trade secrets; advice from CalOHII lawyers; records in connection with pending litigation; and some others. CalOHII will need to review requested records to determine if an exemption applies before a record may be inspected or copied. In addition, many records are readily available at CalOHII's website at www.ohii.ca.gov.

Request for Inspection or Copies of Public Records: In order to help CalOHII provide records promptly, requesters should provide specific information about the records they seek. When a record cannot be identified by name, the requester should attempt to be as specific as possible in describing the record, based on its content. If known, requesters should indicate the program of CalOHII that created or maintains the records. CalOHII does not supplement responses to previous requests when new records are created or received. A separate request must be submitted each time records are sought.

To ensure accuracy in responding to a request, CalOHII encourages all requests to be submitted in writing. Requests can also be made orally, by telephone or in person. You do not need to disclose why you want the records, but for requests that cannot be completed immediately we may need to be able to contact you. Please direct all requests to: Office of Health Information Integrity, Office of Legal Affairs, ATTN: PRA Request, 1600 9th Street, Room 460, Sacramento, CA 95814. Fax: (916) 653-9588. Or e-mail: OHIComments@ohi.ca.gov. You may call to inquire about filing a Public Records Act request or about the status of the current request at (916) 654-3454.

Response Time: Public records in the possession of CalOHII which are not exempt from disclosure shall be available for inspection during the normal business hours of the Department (8:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday). If the request seeks inspection of numerous records, a mutually agreeable time shall be established for the inspection. CalOHII functions will not be suspended to permit inspection of records, and records will not be available for inspection during periods when the records are required by CalOHII personnel in the performance of their duties. Records will not be removed from the possession of CalOHII. A CalOHII employee will be present during the inspection of records.

Some simple requests can be satisfied immediately, others may require more time. Regardless, all records which are not exempt from disclosure shall be available in a reasonable period of time. CalOHII will notify you within 10 days of receipt of your request if CalOHII has records which can be disclosed, in whole or in part. Under some circumstances CalOHII is allowed up to 14 additional calendar days to determine what records exist and what can be disclosed. By the end of this period, CalOHII will notify you whether and when records will be produced. If some or all of the records you requested cannot be released because they are exempt under law, CalOHII will let you know what exemptions apply.

Fees: There is no charge for records copied if using equipment the requester brings to CalOHII. If CalOHII makes copies, the requester must pay \$0.20 per page. Payment must be received in advance. This fee applies to all requests for paper copies. If records exist in electronic form and you want those records in electronic format, CalOHII can provide an electronic file. CalOHII shall make electronic records available in the format requested IF the requested format is one used by CalOHII to create copies for its own use or for other departments, and if the security or integrity of the original is not jeopardized or compromised. Different charges may apply to records in electronic form and we will inform you of those before they are incurred. You will need to pay either by check or money order made payable to "CalOHII-PRA Request" and send the payment to: Office of Health Information Integrity, Office of Legal Affairs, ATTN: PRA Request, 1600 9th Street, Room 460, Sacramento, CA 95814 before CalOHII commences with work.

These guidelines shall be posted in a conspicuous place and a free copy shall be provided upon request.

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