



2500 Grant Road
Mountain View, CA 94040
Phone: 650-940-7300
www.elcaminohealthcaredistrict.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter C. Fung, MD
Gary Kalbach
Julia E. Miller
George O. Ting, MD
John L. Zoglin

El Camino Healthcare District
Guidelines for Access to Public Records
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El Camino Healthcare District (the “District”) understands the importance of assisting the public in its ability to review and gain access to public information maintained by government agencies. That right is provided for in the California Public Records Act (“CPRA”) and the State constitution. As the Legislature stated in enacting the CPRA, “access to information concerning the conduct of people’s business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person in this state.” The District’s guidelines for access to public records rest on that principle and follow the California Department of Justice Guidelines for Access to Public Records dated March 2012.

The following describes the District’s process for reviewing CPRA requests and the steps taken to assure timely assistance and completion.

GUIDELINES

The “Public Records Coordinator”. The District has designated the Controller of El Camino Hospital) as provided in the Management Services Agreement between the District and El Camino Hospital) to facilitate its responses to public records requests. The Controller may be reached by U.S. mail at, Controller’s Office, El Camino Hospital District, 2500 Grant Road, M/S OAK209, Mountain View, CA 94040, by email at Michael_Walsh@elcaminohealth.org or by telephone at 650-940-7265.

Requests Should Be In Writing. Record requests should be in writing (hard copy or by email), unless the request involves records for the purpose of immediate inspection, such as statements of economic interests or these guidelines. Written request can help the District respond to the requests and correctly identify the records. Denials (or requests for clarifications as to the request) will be done in writing. When requests are made orally, the District will ask the requester to follow-up in writing, again to ensure it has correctly understood the request.

Dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the people in our community.

Records Defined. “Records” include any writing owned, used, maintained by the District in its conduct of official business. Writings include information recorded or stored on paper, computer, email, or audio or visual tapes.

Identifying Records. In order to assist the District provide records promptly, requests should provide very specific information about the records they seek. When a record cannot be identified by name, the requester should attempt to be as specified as possible in describing the record, based on its content and, where possible, the date or date ranges for which information is requested.

When a request is not sufficiently specific, the District will assist the requester to identify the information being sought, describe how records that may be requested are stored, and provide suggestions on how to overcome the practical barriers to disclosure.

Inspection of Public Records. Public records maintained by the District shall be available for inspection during the District’s regular business hours. Members of the public are not required to give notice in order to inspect records at the District’s offices during normal working hours. However, if the request requires retrieval, review or redaction of records, a mutually agreeable time will be established for the inspection of the records. Requests for Statements of Economic Interests, this Public Records Guidelines or District publications usually can be provided quickly. Requests for other records may take more time because the records must be located, reviewed for exempt information and copied. The District makes numerous publications and many records are freely available on its website: www.elcaminohealthcaredistrict.org.

In order to prevent records from being lost, damaged or destroyed during an inspection, the District may determine the location of, and may monitor, the inspection.

Processing Requests for Copies of Records. When requested records cannot be produced immediately, the District will, within 10 days after receipt of the requests, inform the requester of its determination regarding disclosure and the reason(s) for the determination. The initial 10-day period may be extended for up to an additional 14 days if the District needs to:

- Inspect and/or retrieve voluminous records
- Consult with others knowledgeable of the request
- Construct a computerized report to extract requested information

The District will provide records within the 10-day period or as quickly as they can be made available. If disclosure cannot be made within the 10-day period, the District will notify the requester in writing that every effort will be made to provide them within a reasonable amount of time given the depth and scope of the request.

Copying Fees. The District may charge the direct cost of duplication when it provides copies of public records (10 cents per page). The direct cost of duplication includes the pro-rata expense of duplicating equipment and staff time (salary and benefits) required to make a copy of the record. Direct costs of duplication do not include the staff time in researching, retrieving, redacting, and mailing the record. When the District must compile electronic data, extract information from electronic records, or undertake computer programming to satisfy a request, the District may require the requester to bear the full costs, not just the direct cost of duplication. The District will inform the requester of these potential additional costs, and/or options to avoid those costs, prior to compiling the information.

Exemptions. The District will provide access to all public records upon request unless the law provides an exemption from mandatory disclosure. Example of records exempt from mandatory disclosure under the CPRA include: certain personnel records, investigative records, confidential legal advice, records prepared in litigation, and information that may be kept confidential pursuant to other state or federal statutes. In most cases, when the District is able to remove or redact exempt information from the requested record, it will disclose the remainder of the record.

Identification of Requesters. District staff shall not demand that persons requesting to inspect records provide their identification, or the reason for wanting to inspect records. However, if the records are to be picked up or mailed to a requester, relevant identifying information must be provided.

RELEVANT STATUTES

California Constitution, Article 1, Section 3, subdivision (b) and the California Public Records Act (Government Code Sections 6250-6276.48) govern the access to records of California state and local government agencies.