

Best Practices for Custodians of Public Records

The following are best practices for custodians of public records.

Not all of the recommendations are required by law.

- When a custodian receives a public records request, the custodian should send out an acknowledgement or receipt for the request.
- The custodian should identify all of the records that must be reviewed for production.
- The custodian should give the requestor an anticipated date of production based on the agency's resources, nature of request, content of the records and location of the records.
- The custodian should review the records to determine whether the conduct is related to public business or purely personal in nature.
- The custodian should review the records for content that is required, by law, to be withheld or redacted.
- The custodian should review the index in the Arizona Agency Handbook published by the Arizona Attorney General's Office for state statutes that require confidentiality and apply those statutes to the requested records.
- The custodian should review the records for material that is private in nature or would interfere with completion of a specific duty of the agency. These interests must be weighed against the public's right to access.
- The custodian should contact the requestor and produce the records.
- The custodian should provide an explanation for the grounds of any withheld records or redactions.