



# Town of Danvers

## Town Clerks Office

Catherine S Ellsworth | Town Clerk  
1 Sylvan Street, Danvers, Massachusetts 01923 | p: 978-777-0001 | f: 978-777-1025  
[www.danversma.gov](http://www.danversma.gov) | [publicrecords@danversma.gov](mailto:publicrecords@danversma.gov)

### Public Records Request Instructions & Guidelines

The following instructions and guidelines are designed to help you better navigate Public Record Requests and assist the Records Access Officer (RAO) in fulfilling requests. This form may be used to make a request, but it is not required. The Town of Danvers offers this form as a means to assist the public and provide a streamlined method for requests to be presented and managed. [Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law can be found here.](#)

The Town Clerk has been designated the RAO for the Town of Danvers. All Public Record Requests must be presented to the Town Clerk. The RAO is also designated to assist citizens during the Public Records Request process. Any questions can be directed to the RAO and responses shall be in electronic format (*e-mail*) unless the requestor specifies otherwise. (*Contact Information Above*).

#### **If you choose to utilize this form, please follow these instructions:**

1. Fill out the Public Records Request form, including your name, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.
2. Please be as specific as possible as to what information you wish to obtain. If your request is general in nature the RAO may contact you and ask for more specific information to help fulfill your request in a timely manner.
3. Please specify which method of communication you prefer; i.e. how you would like to be contacted by the RAO, via e-mail, phone call or through the mail. (*As directed in the Public Records Laws, the preferred method of communication is e-mail.*)
4. After completing the Public Records Request form, you can send it via e-mail (*preferred*), print and mail it or drop it off in person at the Town Clerk's office.
5. The RAO must respond to your request **within 10 Business Days**. A response may include:
  - a. Producing the requested record(s);
  - b. Denying the request, citing specific exemption(s);
  - c. Confirming receipt and date of request;
  - d. Identifying the record(s) and correct custodian of the requested record(s), if not the RAO;
  - e. Outlining what will be withheld or redacted (*If known or applicable*) and providing exemptions;
  - f. Identifying records being produced or intended to be produced and (*if applicable*) a detailed explanation of the reason(s) for the inability to provide the information within the allotted timeframe;
  - g. When you can expect a full response to your request;
  - h. Asking for further clarification or suggest a modification to your request if it can reduce time and cost;
  - i. The RAO may ask for more time to comply with your request;
  - j. If fees are going to be charged, an itemized good-faith estimate will be provided.
6. The RAO has a total of **25 Business Days** to provide a full response to your request unless:
  - a. The RAO appeals to the Supervisor of Records (*Secretary of State*) for good cause, or you the requestor, grant additional time to comply in writing.

*See Appendix for additional information.*



# Town of Danvers

## Town Clerks Office

Catherine S Ellsworth | Town Clerk  
1 Sylvan Street, Danvers, Massachusetts 01923 | p: 978-777-0001 | f: 978-777-1025  
[www.danversma.gov](http://www.danversma.gov) | [publicrecords@danversma.gov](mailto:publicrecords@danversma.gov)

### **APPENDIX**

#### **Categories of public records generally maintained by the Town\***

- Accounting Records
- Annual Reports
- Applications
- Audio/Video Recordings
- Contracts
- Decisions
- Documents or correspondence obtained by or generated by a Public Body or public employee
- E-mails
- Financial Statements
- Permits
- Photographs
- Reports

*\*Some information is exempt from the Public Records Law and can be withheld by the Town. If this is the case, you will be provided an explanation as to which records are exempt as well as the provisions within the law allowing for the exemption. You may appeal these exemptions to the Supervisor of Records.*

#### **Inspection of Public Records:**

Any person may request to examine or be furnished copies of public records during regular office hours. The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Wednesday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Thursday 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and Friday 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Not all records are immediately available and it's strongly encouraged to contact the Town Clerk's Office first.

#### **Fees:**

The Public Records Law allows the RAO to assess a reasonable fee for producing records other than those "freely available", such as on-line or already in electronic format. Here are the fees that could be assessed:

1. 5¢ a page for black and white photocopies
2. Actual cost of electronic storage device (or requestor could provide their own)
3. Not more than \$25.00 per hour beyond the first 2 hours of time needed to produce records.

If fees are intended to be assessed, you will be provided an itemized good-faith estimate in writing. Fees will not exceed the actual cost for reproducing, searching for or complying with the public record(s) request.

Fees may only be collected if an estimate was provided to you in writing and you agreed to pay the fees. RAO may deny a request if fees from prior request(s) are unpaid