

Sample FOIA requests under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act

Example 1: Borrowed with permission from the National Freedom of Information Coalition

[Your Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code}

[Date]

[Name of Custodian of Records]
[Title]
[Company or City/Local Government Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]

Dear [custodian of records]:

Under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act § 15.231 et seq., I am requesting an opportunity to inspect or obtain copies of public records that ***[Describe the records or information sought with enough detail for the public agency to respond. Be as specific as your knowledge of the available records will allow. But it is more important to describe the information you are seeking.]***

If there are any fees for searching or copying these records, please inform me if the cost will exceed \$_____. However, I would also like to request a waiver of all fees in that the disclosure of the requested information is in the public interest and will contribute significantly to the public's understanding of _____. This information is not being sought for commercial purposes.

The Michigan Freedom of Information Act requires a response to this request within five days. If access to the records I am requesting will take longer than this amount of time, please contact me with information about when I might expect copies or the ability to inspect the requested records.

If you deny any or all of this request, please cite each specific exemption you feel justifies the refusal to release the information and notify me of the appeal procedures available to me under the law.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]
[Your Phone number]
[Your e-mail address]

Example 2: Sample language for a police department request

FOIA Coordinator

_____ Police Department

Address

Re: Freedom of Information Act Request

Dear Sir/Madam:

This is a request under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (MCLA § 15.231 et. seq.). I write to request all records, relating to any arrests, charges, prosecutions or complaints filed against [name], who has resided at: ***[fill in any addresses you know]*** from January 1, 2017 to the present.

I will pay reasonable costs for locating and reproducing the requested material. Please contact me at ***[phone number]*** if the costs for the requested material will exceed \$25.00.

You have 5 business days to respond to this request by either providing copies of the records or a detailed written explanation for any denial, including a reference to the specific statutory exemption(s) upon which you rely and the category of documents covered by the exemption. In addition, to the extent that you claim some portions of the responsive materials are exempt from disclosure, please provide all segregable non-exempt portions. Please call me at the above number if you should have any questions.

Example 3: Language for email communication

This is a request under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (MCLA § 15.231 et. seq.). I write to request all communications between Suzy Clerk and Johnny Commissioner beginning January 1, 2018 through January 5, 2018, relating to the January 8, 2018 board meeting.

Example 4: Language for Council reports

This is a request under the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (MCLA § 15.231 et. seq.). I write to request the monthly progress reports made by the Municipal Lighting Authority of Robin City to the Robin City City Council for the last 3 months.