

Visit Baton Rouge Public Records Request Procedure

In Louisiana, public records requests are governed by the Louisiana Public Records Law, La. R.S. 44:1 *et seq.*, allowing individuals to examine documents created or maintained by public bodies. The Louisiana Public Records Law applies to public records requests made to VBR.

Louisiana Public Records Law Definitions

- Public records include any documents, books, letters, maps, photographs, recordings, and electronic data created or used in the conduct of public business by a public body. This encompasses a wide range of materials, including emails and databases.
- The term "public body" refers to any branch, department, agency, board, commission, or political subdivision of the state, as well as quasi-public nonprofit corporations performing governmental functions.
- The "custodian" of a public record is the public official or head of any public body having custody or control of a public record, or a representative specifically authorized by the public official or head of any public body respond to requests to inspect any such public records.

Making a Public Record Request to Visit Baton Rouge

- Any person aged 18 or older can request access to public records.
- A public record request can be made by emailing the Visit Baton Rouge custodian of records.
- The custodian is required to respond to the request within five business days, informing the requester whether the records are available and if any exemptions apply.
- Certain records may be exempt from public access, including materials related to security features of electronic systems and specific confidential documents. The burden of proof for denying access lies with the custodian.
- The custodian shall make no inquiry of any person who applies for a public record, except an inquiry as to the age and identification of the person and may require the person to sign a register.
- The custodian must ensure that public records are preserved and accessible. They are responsible for segregating public records from non-public records and must provide a comfortable environment for individuals to inspect records. There is no fee for the response or to review the public records request.

- There is no specific form that must be used to request records, nor is there any language you must use in your request. To expedite processing of your request, please be as specific as possible. Keep in mind that all public records requests must request a record, not ask a question.
- To facilitate a timely response Individuals interested in making a request should ensure their requests are clear and specific.
- The custodian has no obligation to create public records that do not already exist.
- Confidential records such as personnel files and medical records may not be producible.

Review of Record Request

- Examinations of records must be conducted during regular office or working hours, unless the custodian authorizes examination of records in other than regular office or working hours. In this latter event, the persons designated to represent the custodian during such examination shall be entitled to reasonable compensation to be paid to them by the public body having custody of such record, out of funds provided in advance by the person examining such record in other than regular office or working hours.

Request for Duplication or Copies of Public Records

- Requests for duplication or copies of records must be made and paid for in advance.
- VBR charges .25 per page for copies and .25 per page for electronic copies. Printed two-sided copies will be considered two copies. Printed color copies will be charged at \$1.00 per page. Requests that are more than 50 pages must be picked up at the VBR office during business hours. Fees may vary for larger documents or electronic records.
- In the event of an unusually large, complex or time-consuming request that may require extraordinary effort or time on the part of the custodian or VBR employees, the requester may also be required to reimburse to VBR for additional costs.

VBR Custodian of Records

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