

Records and Information Inquiries

The Office of the Medical Examiner & Trauma Services receives hundreds of inquiries each month for records or case information from law enforcement, media and members of the public. Each inquiry must be carefully considered and thoroughly researched before responding to ensure the information or record provided is accurate and the laws that govern the release of public records and those that protect health-related medical information are adhered to. It is of the utmost importance, to the extent legally possible, that the privacy of the deceased and their families is protected.

Plans are currently underway to better utilize technology to more efficiently process record requests and information inquiries.

- The Medical Examiner's website is undergoing changes to answer frequently asked questions, provide information specific to law enforcement, families and the media, and on-line access to information request forms.
- An [e-mail address](#) is currently available for law enforcement, families and the media to request information and records.
- Enhancements to the Medical Examiner's existing database will provide limited on-line access to searchable records.

Until such time as all the above improvements are completed, the Office of the Medical Examiner and Trauma Services appreciate your assistance when requesting a record or information. To ensure the quickest and most accurate response, follow these procedures:

Records Requests

All requests for records will be processed in good faith according to the guidelines as stated in the Florida Statutes Chapter 119 and other relevant laws.

How to Request a Public Record

A request for a public record can be made by [e-mail](#). Requests can also be made by calling 954-357-5200 or in person at 5301 S.W. 31st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays. Requests for records by e-mail are more efficient and thereby require less time to complete.

Provide as much information as possible about the specific record you are requesting to assist the Medical Examiner/Trauma in providing the most accurate information. For issues about an individual case, please provide at least the names, dates and circumstances. Requests for information on broad topics may require report generation that may or may not be available.

Costs

There may be a fee for a public record request, depending upon the amount of staff time required to fulfill the request and costs such as photocopying. A cost estimate will be provided prior to researching and providing the records. Record requests from law enforcement agencies are not charged.

The following are the most common costs:

Clerical time (includes research and redaction time): first 15 minutes are free; then \$2.50 for each fifteen-minute segment thereafter.

Copies: first 50 pages are free; then 15 cents for each one-sided copy and 20 cents for each two-sided copy.

Delivery Fee (Mailing, Shipping): charged as incurred.

Exemptions

All record requests will be reviewed to determine if the record exists and if all or parts of the record are exempt or confidential. If parts of the record are exempt, those parts will be redacted. If the entire record is exempt, a reason for the exemption will be provided. As an example, records pertaining to an active criminal investigation are exempt. See Florida Statute 119.071 for a detailed list of exempted records.

Information Requests

Information inquiries will be prioritized with law enforcement and families of the deceased given the highest priority. Each inquiry must be carefully considered and thoroughly researched before responding to ensure the information provided is accurate and the laws that govern the release of information and those that protect health-related medical information are followed.

How to Request Information

Information inquiries by [e-mail](#) are preferred. Requests can also be made by calling 954-357-5200 or in person at 5301 S.W. 31st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312. Office hours are 8:00

a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays. Information inquiries by e-mail are more efficient and thereby require less time to complete.

Response Time

Public information inquiries that are received by 10 a.m. on a business day will be responded to no later than 4 p.m. the following business day.