



Public Records Requests FACT SHEET

What is a Public Record?

According to [La. R.S. 44:1\(A\)\(2\)\(a\)](#) “All ... documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, ... having been used, being in use, or prepared, possessed, or retained for use in the conduct, transaction, or performance of any business... conducted... by or under the authority of the constitution or laws of this state, or by or under the authority of any ordinance, regulation, mandate, or order of any public body or concerning the receipt or payment of any money received or paid by or under the authority of the constitution or the laws of this state, are ‘public records’, except as otherwise provided in this Chapter or the Constitution of Louisiana.”

Can I Access Records Online?

Yes! Most of our Agency records are available to search and view online in EDMS. Here are some instructions on how to use the system:

AI Lookup

- 1) Go to the [AI Lookup](#) page.
- 2) Select your search type and input your criteria into the search bar. Then click “Search.”
- 3) The results that display will list all the related AI Numbers.
- 4) To view documents for an AI number, mark the checkbox next to it and click “Return to Document Search.”
- 5) The AI number will be added in the search field on the quick or advanced search screen. Click “Search” to view results.

EDMS – Quick Search

- 1) Go to the [Quick Search](#) page.
- 2) In the Quick Search Bar enter the AI number.
- 3) Click “Search.”
- 4) The results will display a list of all the related documents available in our EDMS. Use the “Filter By” menu on the left of the screen to refine your search results.
Note: For an even more customized search, try our [Advanced Search](#) page.
- 5) To open and review each document, click on the Document ID link.

When Should I Make a Public Records Request?

If you cannot locate the records you’re looking for in EDMS or if the materials you are looking for are not ordinarily stored in EDMS, please feel free to make a public records request! The RM team can also provide downloaded PDFs of large volumes of documents.

To submit a public records request, complete our Public Records Request [online](#) or via [paper](#) form. **A request sent in via email cannot be accepted or processed.**

After receiving your completed form, a member of our records management staff will contact you about the status of your request within **five business days** ([LA RS 44](#)).

What Is the Public Records Process Like?

After receiving your public records request, a member of our records management team will review it and initiate the process to collect the requested materials. Here are a few examples of our collection process:

Records in EDMS

- The RM team can download **small and large quantities of documents from EDMS** and transmit them to you via a secure **download link** or on **paper/CD** upon request (may be associated with costs according to the fee schedule)

Access-protected materials

- Some materials in EDMS are protected by higher access rights due to **security sensitive or confidential contents**. These are searchable, but not viewable in EDMS.
- When requested through a public records request, these records are reviewed by a subject matter expert and legal counsel to determine if and what contents can be released, and what must be redacted.
- If redactions are made, the release will state as such and note under what authority those materials are considered exempt.

Data Collection and Processing

- For requests requiring data collection or processing, the appropriate divisional contact will provide us with a timeline for how long it will take, then provide the data.
- If the data processing activity falls outside of the employee's usual duties, there will be an associated cost of production based on the amount of time it takes to process the data, in which case we will send you a **notice of cost** for approval before proceeding.

Records and materials not in EDMS

- Materials that are not readily available in EDMS (e.g. administrative email correspondence, internal working files, documents that have not yet been processed), will first need to be gathered from DEQ staff.
- Once materials have been gathered, they will be reviewed prior to release to verify there is no security sensitive or exempt information.

Certified copies

- RM can provide certified copies of records on either paper or CD.
- Certification requests will receive a notice of cost prior to fulfillment.

Historical Materials

- LDEQ has some Backfile regional office materials; while most are believed to be duplicative of EDMS materials, some older records may only be available on paper.
- If you'd like to review unprocessed historical materials in person, you can make an appointment to visit our Public Records Center by emailing publicrecords@la.gov.

These are just a few examples of the types of requests we process. Public records requests can be extremely varied and require individual attention.

We strive to keep an open line of communication with you to ensure that you are updated about the status of your request until the request is closed. If you have questions, you can reach our team at publicrecords@la.gov.