Policy Manual

Records Maintenance and Release

804.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance on the maintenance and release of department records. Protected information is separately covered in the Protected Information Policy.

804.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Legal custodian of records - The person designated by the Department as the legal custodian of records to fulfill all duties required by law, if no designation is made the legal custodian of records shall be the Chief of Police (Wis. Stat. § 19.21; Wis. Stat. § 19.33).

Public records

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804.4.3 NOTICE REQUIREMENTS IN LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCES

If a record subject to Wis. Stat. § 19.356(2) or any portion thereof, is released, the Department shall notify the affected individual before access is granted and within three days after making the decision to grant access (Wis. Stat. § 19.356(2)(a)).

Within five days after receipt of notice by the Department, an individual may provide written notification of his/her intent to seek a court order restraining the Department from providing access to the requested record (Wis. Stat. § 19.356(3)).

Within 10 days after receipt of a notice by the Department, an individual may commence an action seeking a court order to restrain the Department from providing access to the requested record (Wis. Stat. § 19.356(4)).

The Department shall not provide access to the requested record within 12 days of sending a notice to an individual pertaining to that record. In addition, if the individual commences a court action, the Department shall not provide access to the requested record during pendency of the action. The Department shall not provide access to the requested record until any appeal is decided, until the period for appealing or petitioning for review expires, until a petition for review is denied, or until the Department receives written notice from the individual that an appeal or petition for review will not be filed, whichever occurs first (Wis. Stat. § 19.356(5)).

804.4.4 DENIALS

The denial of a request for records is subject to the following:

If a written request is denied in whole or in part, the requester shall receive a written statement of the reasons for denying the request. The denial shall inform the requester that the written request for the record release determination is subject to review by a court or upon application to the Attorney General or a District Attorney (Wis. Stat. § 19.35(4)(b)).

804.4.5 RECORDS DESTRUCTION

No record shall be destroyed at any time after the receipt of a request for inspection or copying of the record until after the request is granted or until at least 60 days after the date that the request is denied or, if the requester is a committed or incarcerated person, until at least 90 days after the date that the request is denied.

If the Department receives written notice that an action relating to a record has been commenced in court, the record may not be destroyed until after the order of the court is issued and the deadline for appealing that order has passed, or, if appealed, until after the order of the court hearing the appeal is issued. If the court orders the production of any record, and the order is not appealed, the record may not be destroyed until after the request for inspection or copying is granted (Wis. Stat. § 19.35(5)).

804.5 RELEASE RESTRICTIONS

Examples of release restrictions include:

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- (a) Personal identifying information, including an individual's photograph; Social Security and driver identification numbers; name, address and telephone number; and medical or disability information that is contained in any driver license record, motor vehicle record or any department record, including traffic crash reports, are restricted except as authorized by the Department, and only when such use or disclosure is permitted or required by law to carry out a legitimate law enforcement purpose (18 USC § 2721; 18 USC § 2722; Wis. Stat. § 19.36(10)).
- (b) Any record containing personally identifiable information that is collected or maintained in connection with a complaint, investigation or other circumstance and that may lead to an enforcement action, administrative proceeding, arbitration proceeding or court proceeding. This includes any record that is collected or maintained in connection with such an action or proceeding (Wis. Stat. § 19.35(1)(am)).
- (c) Any record containing personally identifiable information that, if disclosed, could result in (Wis. Stat. § 19.35(1)(am)):
 - 1. Endangering an individual's life or safety.
 - 2. Identifying a confidential informant (Wis. Stat. § 19.36(8)).
 - 3. Endangering security, including that of the staff or population of a detention facility.
- (d) Any record that is part of a records series that is not indexed, arranged or automated in a way that the record can be retrieved by use of an individual's name, address or other identifier (Wis. Stat. § 19.35(1)(am).
- (e) Any record with the home, school or work address of a participant in the Wisconsin Department of Justice Address Confidentiality Program (Wis. Stat. § 19.35(1)(am)2m).
- (f) Crime victim and witness information (Wis. Stat. § 950.04).
- (g) Juvenile-related information (Wis. Stat. § 938.396; Wis. Stat. § 48.78; Wis. Stat. § 48.396; Wis. Stat. § 938.78).
- (h) Search warrants until they have been executed (Wis. Stat. § 968.21).
- (i) Investigative information obtained for law enforcement purposes, when required by federal law or regulation to be kept confidential, or when confidentiality is required as a condition to receipt of state aids (Wis. Stat. § 19.36(2)).
- (j) Information in employee personnel records (Wis. Stat. § 19.36(10)).
- (k) Patient health care records (Wis. Stat. § 146.82).
- (I) Records where the government's interest in nondisclosure outweighs the public's interest in disclosure.

804.6 SUBPOENAS AND DISCOVERY REQUESTS

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804.9 EXPUNGEMENT

Expungement orders received by the Department shall be reviewed for appropriate action by the Custodian of Records. The Custodian of Records shall expunge such records as ordered by the court (Wis. Stat. § 973.015; Wis. Stat. § 938.355). Records may include, but are not limited to, a record of arrest, investigation, detention or conviction. Once the record is expunged, members shall respond to any inquiry as though the record did not exist.