



Town of Bolton

Office of the Town Clerk

663 Main Street, P.O. Box 278, Bolton, MA 01740

(978) 779-2771

townclerk@townofbolton.com

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Re: Public Records Law

On January 1, 2017, "An Act to Improve Public Records", Chapter 121 Acts of 2016, became effective. The purpose of this memo is to:

1. Provide you with an overview of the key points of this legislation,
2. Provide reference materials to advance your understanding of this Act,
3. Inform you of your appointment as a Records Access Officer (RAO),
4. Make you aware of your responsibilities under this new legislation,
5. Provide an overview of forms and documents available on the town website.

Overview of the Key Points of the New Public Records Law

1. Within 10 business days, we must respond and attempt to fulfill public records requests or provide reasons for our inability to do so. We have up to 25 business days from the original request to provide a full response.
2. Minimal fees may be assessed for public records requests (.05 per page),
3. Municipalities must designate Records Access Officers (RAOs) as accountable to fulfill public records requests.

Reference Materials:

The new provisions of the law can be found at the following link:

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/prenotice.htm>

All designated RAO's and contact information has been posted on the town website by department:

http://www.townofbolton.com/Pages/BoltonMA_WebDocs/PublicRecordsRequests

Your Appointment as a Records Access Officer (RAO)

The Town Clerk is by default an RAO. Working with Don Lowe, we have decided to appoint each department head as an RAO for the records in their custody. The list of appointed RAO's is below. Note that your appointment is effective immediately.

- Ninotchka Rogers, Town Accountant
- Cynthia Bradbury, Assessors
- Pamela Powell, Town Clerk
- Rebecca Longvall, Conservation Administrator
- Lisa D'Eon, Council On Aging

- Jeffrey Legendre, Fire Chief
- Kristen Zina, Board of Health & Building
- Kelly Collins, Library Director
- Warren Nelson, Police Chief
- Joseph Lynch, DPW Director
- Erica Uriarte, Planning, Appeals, EDC
- Kristen Noel, Treasurer, Collector, HR
- Don Lowe, Town Administrator
- Jennifer Jacobsen, Assistant to Town Administrator

Our Responsibilities as Records Access Officers

As an RAO, you are responsible to:

1. Assist requestors in making requests,
2. Provide proper maintenance to the records in your custody,
3. Within 10 business days, provide the requested information OR provide our reasons for inability to do so, along with expected date of the full response. We have up to 25 business days from the original request to provide a full response.
4. Maintain a written log of all requests you receive for public records – see the next section for additional information.

Available Forms and Documents to Help You

As an RAO, you are responsible to track all public records requests. The following information is available to assist you:

- A form to assist requestors in defining their requests. There is a fillable PDF and a Word Document. Both are located at S:\Public_Records\Request Forms.
 - You may wish to have a supply in your office for walk in requests.
- A sample response letter is also available at S:\Public_Records\Response Forms.
- Please also visit the TownofBolton.com, and look for 'Public Documents' on the left navigation pane. Then look for 'Public Records Requests' to view all documents available on the town website.

Please refer to the updated law or contact Jen or myself if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Pam