

**SAUGATUCK TOWNSHIP
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES**

Section 1: General Administration

1.1. Purpose. These Procedures and Guidelines provide for the administration of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, 1976 PA 442, as amended, MCL 15.231 *et seq.* (the “FOIA”), within the Saugatuck Township.

1.2. FOIA Coordinator and Designees. The Township Clerk is the FOIA Coordinator for the Township. The FOIA Coordinator may designate other Township staff to respond to FOIA requests from time to time. When used in the remainder of these Procedures and Guidelines, the term “FOIA Coordinator,” includes all authorized designees.

1.3. Administrative Rules and Forms. The FOIA Coordinator may implement additional administrative rules and promulgate forms to be used by the Township in processing FOIA requests, provided those rules and forms are consistent with the FOIA and these Procedures and Guidelines. In accordance with the FOIA, the FOIA Coordinator shall promulgate: (1) a Detailed Itemization of Costs Form to be used whenever the Township charges FOIA fees, and (2) a Public Summary of these Procedures and Guidelines.

1.4. Public Inspection. Reasonable facilities and opportunities will be provided for examination and inspection of public records during normal business hours. The FOIA Coordinator may promulgate rules regulating the inspection of records so as to protect against loss, alteration, mutilation, or destruction and to avoid excessive interference with Township operations.

1.5. Records Retention. The FOIA Coordinator shall ensure that Township staff follow appropriate records retention policies, in compliance with applicable state requirements. Further, the FOIA Coordinator shall keep a copy of all written requests for public records received by the Township for a period of at least one year.

1.6. Availability of Policies and Forms. The following documents are posted on the Township’s website and available in all Township offices: (1) these Procedures and Guidelines; (2) the Detailed Itemization of Costs Form; and (3) the Public Summary of these Procedures and Guidelines.

Section 2: Requests for Public Records

2.1. Requests in Writing. A person making a request pursuant to the FOIA to inspect or obtain copies of public records prepared, owned, used, possessed or retained by the Township must do so in writing. The request must sufficiently describe a public record so as to enable Township personnel to identify and find the requested public record. There is no required form for submitting requests.

2.2. Method of Submission. To ensure proper receipt, the Township prefers that FOIA requests be made by one of the following methods:

Mail / Hand Delivery	Email	Facsimile
Saugatuck Township Offices Attn: FOIA Request P.O. Box 100 Saugatuck, MI 49453	Email to Township Clerk at Address listed on the “Contact” Page of the Township Website	(269) 857-4542

However, requests may be submitted in person or by mail to any Township office, and shall be forwarded to the FOIA Coordinator or appropriate designee.

2.3. Receipt of Emails and Facsimiles. If the Township receives a request for a public record by facsimile or email, the request is deemed to have been received on the following business day. If a request is sent by email and delivered to a Township spam or junk-mail folder, the request is not deemed received until one day after the FOIA Coordinator first becomes aware of the request. The FOIA Coordinator shall note in the FOIA log both the date the request was delivered to the spam or junk-mail folder and the date the FOIA Coordinator became aware of the request. The FOIA Coordinator shall review his or her spam and junk-mail folders on a regular basis, no less than once a week.

2.4. Requesting Non-Paper Disclosure. A person may request that public records be provided by email or on non-paper physical media. The Township will comply with the requests for the use of non-paper physical media only if it has the technological capacity to do so, without acquiring additional hardware.

2.5. Subscriptions to Public Records. A person may request to subscribe to future public records that are created, issued, or disseminated by the Township on a regular basis (e.g. agendas, minutes, and other periodic reports). A subscription is valid for up to 6 months and may be renewed by the subscriber.

2.6. Incarcerated Persons. The Township is not obligated under the FOIA to respond to records requests from persons serving a sentence of imprisonment in a local, state or federal correctional facility. However, in the interest of transparency, the Township may choose to respond to requests from incarcerated persons if there are compelling reasons to do so. An incarcerated person who receives a response from the Township is not entitled to the appeal rights or legal causes of action provided in the FOIA.

Section 3: Responding to a Request

3.1. No Obligation to Create New Records. The FOIA does not require the Township to create a new public record, make a compilation or summary of information which does not already exist, or answer questions contained in requests for public records. The Township's response obligations are as described in this Section.

3.2. Time Period for Responding. Unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the person making the request, the FOIA Coordinator will either: (1) issue a response to a FOIA request within 5 business days of receipt, or (2) issue a notice indicating that, due to the nature of the request, the Township needs an additional 10 business days to respond. The Township's normal procedure is to respond within 5 days, and to issue a 10-day extension only in unusual circumstances such as when the FOIA Coordinator is unavailable, or when legal counsel is required to determine whether requested information is exempt from disclosure.

3.3. Form of Response. A response granting a FOIA request may be delivered in any form acceptable to or specified by the requester. A response denying a FOIA request shall be delivered in writing and signed by the FOIA Coordinator. The FOIA Coordinator shall deliver a copy of these Procedures and Guidelines and the Township's Public Summary thereof simultaneously with all responses or, if responding by email, shall include a link to those documents on the Township's website.

3.4. Options for Disposition. The Township will respond to a request by:

- A. Granting the request;
- B. Issuing a written notice denying the request;
- C. Granting the request in part and issuing a written notice denying the request in part; or

- D. Issuing a written notice indicating that the public record requested is available at no charge on the Township's website.

3.5. Delivery or Inspection of Records After Grant. A response granting a request in whole or in part shall do one of the following: (1) provide the requested records; (2) provide information as to when and how the requester can inspect the requested record in a Township facility, if the requestor asked for an opportunity for inspection; (3) inform the requester that payment of applicable fees is required before the Township will provide the requested records; or (4) inform the requester that the Township is requiring a fee deposit before searching for the requested records and separating exempt material. Certified copies of public records shall be provided at no additional cost upon request.

3.6. Contents of Denial Notice. If request is denied or denied in part, the FOIA Coordinator will issue a denial notice which shall provide, as applicable:

- A. An explanation as to why the record (or material redacted from the record) is exempt from disclosure; or
- B. A certification stating that the requested record does not exist under the name or description provided by the requestor, or another name reasonably known by the Township; and
- C. A description of any material redacted from the record; and
- D. An explanation of the person's right to submit an appeal of the denial to the Township Board, or to seek judicial review in the Allegan County Circuit Court; and
- E. An explanation of the right to receive attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements as well actual or compensatory damages, and punitive damages of \$1,000, should they prevail in Circuit Court.

3.7. Denial of Deficient Requests. If a request does not sufficiently describe a public record, the FOIA Coordinator may issue a denial notice seeking clarification. The requester's clarification will be considered a new request subject to the timelines described in this Section.

3.8. Receipt of Requests by Non-Designated Employees. Any employee receiving a written communication that conveys a request for information shall forward the communication to the FOIA Coordinator. Township employees are not generally obligated to respond to verbal requests for information, but if the employee knows that requested information is available on the Township's website, the employee shall inform a verbal requester of that fact.

Section 4: Fee Calculations

4.1. Fee Categories. Subject to the terms and conditions in this Section, the Township may charge for the following costs associated with processing a FOIA request:

- A. Labor costs directly associated with searching for, locating and examining a requested public record (only when failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs).
- B. Labor costs associated with a review of a record to separate and delete information exempt from disclosure of information which is disclosed (only when failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs).
- C. The actual cost of computer discs, computer tapes or other similar non-paper media.
- D. The cost of the duplication, not including labor, of paper copies of public records.
- E. The cost of labor associated with duplication or publication, including making paper

copies, making digital copies or transferring digital public records to non-paper physical media or through the Internet or other electronic means.

F. The actual cost of mailing or sending a public record.

4.2. Labor Fees. Fees for labor costs will be calculated in accordance with the following:

- A. All labor costs will be estimated and charged in 15 minute increments with all partial time increments rounded down.
- B. Labor costs for employees will be charged at the hourly wage of the lowest-paid Township employee capable of doing the work in the specific fee category, regardless of who actually performs the work.
- C. If using contract or outside labor to separate and delete exempt material from non-exempt material, the public body must clearly note the name of person or firm who does the work and total labor fee for the work may not exceed an amount 6 times the state minimum hourly wage. No fee shall be charged for contract or outside laborers performing any function other than those specified in this paragraph (e.g. no fee shall be charged for contract information technology personnel performing electronic searches for records).
- D. Labor costs may be charged to cover or partially cover the cost of fringe benefits for employees. The Township may add up to 50% to the applicable labor charge to cover or partially cover the cost of fringe benefits, but the charge shall not exceed the actual cost of fringe benefits.
- E. Overtime wages may not be included in labor costs unless agreed to by the requestor. Overtime costs will not be used to calculate the fringe benefit cost.

4.3. “Unreasonably High Cost” Requirement. When charging a fee for the categories of labor described in 4.1.A and 4.1.B above, the FOIA Coordinator shall specifically identify why the failure to charge a fee would result in unreasonably high costs to the Township, which are costs greater than those incurred in the typical or usual request received by the Township. The following factors may be relevant:

- A. The volume of the public record requested
- B. The amount of time spent to search for, examine, review and separate exempt from non-exempt information in the record requested.
- C. Whether public records from more than one Township department or various Township offices is necessary to respond to the request.
- D. The available staffing to respond to the request.
- E. Other similar factors identified by the FOIA Coordinator.

4.4. Non-Paper Media Fees. Fees for providing records on non-paper physical media are calculated based on the actual cost of procuring the non-paper physical media used. In order to ensure the integrity and security of the Township's technology infrastructure, the Township will procure the requested non-paper media and will not accept non-paper media from the requestor. The Township will procure the needed non-paper media at the most reasonably economical cost.

4.5. Copying Fees. The fee for paper copies made on standard letter (8 1/2 x 11) or legal (8 1/2 x 14) sized paper is \$.10 per sheet. Copies for nonstandard sized sheets of paper will reflect the actual cost of reproduction. The Township may provide records using double-sided printing, if cost-saving and available.

4.6. Mailing Fees. Fees for mailing records to the requestor are based on the actual cost of mailing, using a reasonably economical and justified means. The Township may charge for the least expensive form of postal delivery confirmation, but shall not charge for expedited shipping or insurance unless requested.

4.7. Fee Reductions. The FOIA Coordinator shall reduce the amount of the applicable fee for labor costs by 5% for each day the Township exceeds the applicable deadline for responding to a FOIA request, up to a maximum reduction of 50% of such fee, if any of the following applies:

- A. The late response was willful and intentional;
- B. The written request, within the first 250 words of the body of a letter facsimile, e-mail or e-mail attachment conveyed a request for information; or
- C. The written request included the words, characters, or abbreviations for "freedom of information," "information" "FOIA," "copy," or a recognizable misspelling of such, or legal code reference to MCL 15. 231 *et seq.* or 1976 Public Act 442 on the front of an envelope or in the subject line of an e-mail, letter or facsimile cover page.

The FOIA Coordinator shall fully note any fee reduction in the Detailed Itemization of Costs Form.

Section 5: Fee Deposits

5.1. Good Faith Deposit. If, based on a good faith calculation by the Township, the cost of processing a FOIA request is expected to exceed \$50, or if the requestor has not fully paid for a previously granted request, the Township will require a good-faith deposit before processing the request. In making the request for a good-faith deposit the FOIA Coordinator shall provide the requestor with a detailed itemization of the allowable costs estimated to be incurred by the Township to process the request and also provide a best efforts estimate of a time frame it will take the Township to provide the records to the requestor. The best efforts estimate shall be nonbinding on the Township, but will be made in good faith and will strive to be reasonably accurate, given the nature of the request in the particular instance, so as to provide the requested records in a manner based on the public policy expressed by Section 1 of the FOIA.

5.2. Deposits Due to High Estimated Fees. If a deposit is charged because the fee estimate is expected to exceed \$50.00, the deposit shall not exceed one half of the total estimated fee.

5.3. Deposits Due to Prior Non-Payment. If a deposit is charged because the requester has not fully paid the Township for copies of public records made in fulfillment of a request, a deposit of 100% of the estimated processing fee may be charged if:

- A. The prior request was made within the last 365 days;
- B. The final fee for the prior request is not more than 105% of the estimated fee;
- C. The public records made available contained the information sought in the prior request and remain in the Township's possession;
- D. The public records were made available to the individual, subject to payment, within the time frame estimated by the Township to provide the records;
- E. 90 days have passed since the FOIA Coordinator notified the individual in writing that the public records were available for pickup or mailing;
- F. The individual is unable to show proof of prior payment to the Township; and
- G. The FOIA Coordinator has calculated a detailed itemization that is the basis for the current written request's increased estimated fee deposit.

Section 6: Fee Waivers

6.1. Public Interest Waiver. The FOIA Coordinator may, in his or her sole discretion, waive or reduce FOIA fees upon determining that the request is in the public interest.

6.2. Indigency Waiver. The FOIA Coordinator shall generally waive the first \$20.00 of a FOIA fee if the requester submits a sworn affidavit stating that the requester is indigent and receiving specific public assistance, or otherwise demonstrating an inability to pay because of indigence. However, fees shall not be waived if:

- A. The requestor has previously received discounted copies of public records from the Township two times during the calendar year; or
- B. The requestor requests information in connection with other persons who are offering or providing payment to make the request.

6.3. Waiver for Certain Nonprofit Organizations. The FOIA Coordinator shall waive the first \$20.00 of a FOIA fee if the requester is a nonprofit organization designated to by the State to carry out activities under subtitle C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 200 and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, or their successors, if the request is:

- A. Made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients;
- B. Made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under Section 931 of the Mental Health Code, MCL 330.1931; and
- C. Accompanied by documentation of its designation by the State.

Section 7: Appeals

7.1. Appeals to Township Board. A requester may appeal a decision of the FOIA Coordinator on the grounds that: (1) all or a portion of a public record has not been disclosed or has been improperly exempted from disclosure; or (2) the fee charged to process a FOIA request exceeds the amount permitted by state law. Appeals shall be heard by the Township Board. The appeal must be in writing, specifically state the word “appeal” and identify the reason or reasons the requestor is seeking a reversal of the denial. If no appeal is taken within the applicable timeframe, the decision of the FOIA Coordinator shall be deemed to be the final decision of the Township.

7.2. Decision on Nondisclosure Appeals. After the filing of the written appeal asserting that all or a portion of a public record has not been disclosed or has been improperly exempted from disclosure, the Township Board will consider the appeal at the next public meeting for which the agenda has not already been set. The Township Board will render a decision at the meeting and issue a written notice:

- A. Reversing the disclosure denial;
- B. Upholding the disclosure denial; or
- C. Reversing the disclosure denial in part and upholding the disclosure denial in part.

7.3. Decision on Fee Appeals. After the filing of the written appeal asserting that the fee charged to process a FOIA request exceeds the amount permitted by state law, the Township Board will consider the appeal at the next public meeting for which the agenda has not already been set. The Township Board will render a decision at the meeting and issue a written notice:

- A. Waive the fee;

- B. Reduce the fee and issue a written determination indicating the specific basis that supports the remaining fee, accompanied by a certification by the Township Manager that the statements in the determination are accurate and the reduced fee amount complies with these Procedures and Guidelines and Section 4 of the FOIA;
- C. Uphold the fee and issue a written determination indicating the specific basis under Section 4 of the FOIA that supports the required fee, accompanied by a certification by the Township Manager that the statements in the determination are accurate and the fee amount complies with these Procedures and Guidelines and Section 4 of the FOIA; or
- D. Issue a notice detailing the reason or reasons for extending for not more than 10 business days the period during which the Township Manager will respond to the written appeal.

7.4. Extension of Time for Board to Consider Appeal. Under unusual circumstances, such as the need to examine or review a voluminous amount of separate and distinct public records or the need to collect the requested records from numerous facilities located apart from the office receiving or processing the request, the Township may issue not more than 1 notice of extension, scheduling the Township Board's consideration of the appeal for a date not more than 20 business days from the date of the first meeting held by the Board after the appeal was filed.

7.5. Deadline for Circuit Court Actions. The requestor may file a civil action in Allegan County Circuit Court to challenge the Township's response to a FOIA request within: (1) 180 days after the Township's final decision, if challenging nondisclosure; or (2) 45 days after the Township's final decision, if challenging a requested fee. Notably, a requestor may challenge a determination of the FOIA coordinator in civil action in without first appealing to the Township Manager, if the challenge is based on nondisclosure.

7.6. Circuit Court Remedies in Nondisclosure Cases. If a court determines that a public record is not exempt from disclosure, it will award the appellant reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements. If the court determines that the appellant prevails only in part, the court in its discretion may award all or an appropriate portion of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements. If the court determines that the Township arbitrarily and capriciously violated the FOIA by refusing or delaying the disclosure of copies of a public record, it will award the appellant punitive damages in the amount of \$1,000.

7.7. Circuit Court Remedies in Fee Cases. If the court determines that the Township required a fee that exceeds the amount permitted, it shall reduce the fee to a permissible amount. If the appellant in the civil action prevails by receiving a reduction of 50% or more of the total fee, the court may award all or appropriate amount of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements. If the court determines that Township has acted arbitrarily and capriciously by charging an excessive fee, the court will also award the appellant punitive damages in the amount of \$500.

Section 8: Miscellaneous

8.1. Effective Date. These Procedures and Guidelines shall take effect on April 15, 2022.

8.2. Repealer. As of their effective date, these Procedures and Guidelines repeal and supersede all previous FOIA policies promulgated by Township Board or Township staff.

8.3. Modifications by FOIA Coordinator. If any provision of these Procedures and Guidelines is found to be in conflict with any State statute, or if the FOIA is amended in a manner that creates a conflict, the FOIA Coordinator is authorized to modify the affected provisions of these Procedures and Guidelines. The FOIA Coordinator shall inform the Township Board of any change.

Section 9: Forms

The following forms attached hereto are incorporated into these Procedures & Guidelines:

Attachment A	FOIA Request for Public Records Form
Attachment B	Detailed Cost Itemization
Attachment C	Notice to Extend Time for a FOIA Request
Attachment D	Notice of Denial of FOIA Request
Attachment E	FOIA Appeal Form-To Appeal of a Denial of Records
Attachment F	FOIA Appeal Form-To Appeal an Excess Fee

The FOIA Coordinator may use the forms in substantially the form attached as Attachments A through F in processing FOIA requests. The FOIA Coordinator may modify the forms attached as Attachments A through F as necessary or appropriate to conform the forms to these Procedures & Guidelines or the Act or to otherwise improve the forms for use by the FOIA Coordinator and the public.

ATTACHMENT A

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Records Located on Website

If the township directly or indirectly administers or maintains an official internet presence, any public records available to the general public on that internet site at the time the request is made are exempt from any labor charges to redact (*separate exempt information from non-exempt information*).

If the FOIA coordinator knows or has reason to know that all or a portion of the requested information is available on its website, the township must notify the requestor in its written response that all or a portion of the requested information is available on its website. The written response, to the degree practicable in the specific instance, must include a specific webpage address where the requested information is available. On the detailed cost itemization form, the township must separate the requested public records that are available on its website from those that are not available on the website and must inform the requestor of the additional charge to receive copies of the public records that are available on its website.

If the township has included the website address for a record in its written response to the requestor and the requestor thereafter stipulates that the public record be provided to him or her in a paper format or other form, including digital media, the township must provide the public records in the specified format (if the township has the technological capability) but may use a fringe benefit multiplier greater than the 50%, not to exceed the actual costs of providing the information in the specified format.

Request for Copies/Duplication of Records on Township Website

I hereby stipulate that, even if some or all of the records are located on a township website, I am requesting that the township make copies of those records on the website and deliver them to me in the format I have requested above. I understand that some FOIA fees may apply.

Requestor's Signature	Date
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Overtime Labor Costs

Overtime wages shall not be included in the calculation of labor costs unless overtime is specifically stipulated by the requestor and clearly noted on the detailed cost itemization form.

Consent to Overtime Labor Costs

I hereby agree and stipulate to the township using overtime wages in calculating the following labor costs as itemized in the following categories:

- 1. Labor to copy/duplicate
- 2. Labor to locate
- 3a. Labor to redact
- 3b. Contract labor to redact
- 6b. Labor to copy/duplicate records already on township's website

Requestor's Signature	Date
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Request for Discount: Indigence

A public record search **must** be made and a copy of a public record **must** be furnished **without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee** for each request by an individual who is entitled to information under this act and who:

- 1) Submits an affidavit stating that the individual is indigent and receiving specific public assistance, **OR**
- 2) If not receiving public assistance, stating facts showing inability to pay the cost because of indigence.

If a requestor is ineligible for the discount, the public body shall inform the requestor specifically of the reason for ineligibility in the public body's written response. An individual is ineligible for this fee reduction if **ANY** of the following apply:

- (i) The individual has previously received discounted copies of public records from the same public body twice during that calendar year,
- (ii) The individual requests the information in conjunction with outside parties who are offering or providing payment or other remuneration to the individual to make the request. A public body may require a statement by the requestor in the affidavit that the request is not being made in conjunction with outside parties in exchange for payment or other remuneration.

Office Use: Affidavit Received ___ No. of Previous Discounted Requests During _____ Calendar Year
 Eligible for Discount Ineligible for Discount

I am submitting an affidavit and requesting that I receive the discount for indigence for this FOIA request: Requestor's Signature:	Date:
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Request for Discount: Nonprofit Organization

A public record search **must** be made and a copy of a public record **must** be furnished **without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee** for each request by a nonprofit organization formally designated by the state to carry out activities under subtitle C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, if the request meets **ALL** of the following requirements:

- (i) Is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients.
- (ii) Is made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under section 931 of the Mental Health Code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1931.
- (iii) Is accompanied by documentation of its designation by the state, if requested by the township.

Office Use: Documentation of State Designation Received Eligible for Discount Ineligible for Discount

I stipulate that I am a designated agent for the nonprofit organization making this FOIA request and that this request is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients and is made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under section 931 of the Mental Health Code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1931: Requestor's Signature:	Date:
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ATTACHMENT B

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Township: Keep original and provide copies of both sides of each sheet, along with Public Summary, to requestor at no charge.

Saugatuck Township, Allegan County
 3461 Blue Star Hwy, PO Box 100
 Saugatuck, MI 49453
 Phone: 269-857-7721

Freedom of Information Act Request Detailed Cost Itemization

Date: _____ Prepared for Request No.: _____ Date Request Received: _____

<p>The following costs are being charged in compliance with Section 4 of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, MCL 15.234, according to the township's FOIA Policies and Guidelines.</p>		
<p>1. Labor Cost for Copying / Duplication</p> <p>This is the cost of labor directly associated with duplication of publication, including making paper copies, making digital copies, or transferring digital public records to be given to the requestor on non-paper physical media or through the Internet or other electronic means as stipulated by the requestor.</p> <p>This shall not be more than the hourly wage of the township's lowest-paid employee capable of necessary duplication or publication in this particular instance, regardless of whether that person is available or who actually performs the labor.</p> <p>These costs will be estimated and charged in _____-minute time increments as set by the township board (for example: 15-minutes or more); all partial time increments must be rounded down. If the number of minutes is less than one increment, there is no charge.</p> <p>Hourly Wage Charged: \$ _____ Charge per increment: \$ _____ OR Hourly Wage with Fringe Benefit Cost: \$ _____ OR Multiply the hourly wage by the percentage multiplier: _____% (up to 50% of the hourly wage) and add to the hourly wage for a total per hour rate.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Overtime rate charged as stipulated by Requestor (overtime is not used to calculate the fringe benefit cost)</p>	<p>To figure the number of increments, take the number of minutes: _____, divide by _____-minute increments, and round down. Enter below:</p> <p>Number of increments x _____ =</p>	<p>1. Labor Cost \$ _____</p>
<p>2. Labor Cost to Locate:</p> <p>This is the cost of labor directly associated with the necessary searching for, locating, and examining public records in conjunction with receiving and fulfilling a granted written request. This fee is being charged because failure to do so will result in unreasonably high costs to the township that are excessive and beyond the normal or usual amount for those services compared to the township's usual FOIA requests, because of the nature of the request in this particular instance, specifically: _____</p> <hr/> <p>The township will not charge more than the hourly wage of its lowest-paid employee capable of searching for, locating, and examining the public records in this particular instance, regardless of whether that person is available or who actually performs the labor.</p> <p>These costs will be estimated and charged in _____-minute time increments (must be 15-minutes or more); all partial time increments must be rounded down. If the number of minutes is less than 15, there is no charge.</p> <p>Hourly Wage Charged: \$ _____ Charge per increment: \$ _____ OR Hourly Wage with Fringe Benefit Cost: \$ _____ OR Multiply the hourly wage by the percentage multiplier: _____% (up to 50% of the hourly wage) and add to the hourly wage for a total per hour rate.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Overtime rate charged as stipulated by Requestor (overtime is not used to calculate the fringe benefit cost)</p>	<p>To figure the number of increments, take the number of minutes: _____, divide by _____-minute increments, and round down. Enter below:</p> <p>Number of increments x _____ =</p>	<p>2. Labor Cost \$ _____</p>

3a. Employee Labor Cost for Separating Exempt from Non-Exempt (Redacting):

(Fill this out if using a township employee. If contracted, use No. 3b instead).

The township will not charge for labor directly associated with redaction if it knows or has reason to know that it previously redacted the record in question and still has the redacted version in its possession.

This fee is being charged because failure to do so will result in unreasonably high costs to the township that are excessive and beyond the normal or usual amount for those services compared to the township's usual FOIA requests, because of the nature of the request in this particular instance, specifically: _____

This is the cost of labor of a **township employee**, including necessary review, directly associated with separating and deleting exempt from nonexempt information. This shall not be more than the hourly wage of the **township's lowest-paid employee** capable of separating and deleting exempt from nonexempt information in this particular instance, regardless of whether that person is available or who actually performs the labor.

These costs will be estimated and charged in ____-minute time increments (*must be 15-minutes or more*); all partial time increments must be rounded down. *If the number of minutes is less than 15, there is no charge.*

Hourly Wage Charged: \$ _____

Charge per increment: \$ _____

OR

Hourly Wage with Fringe Benefit Cost: \$ _____

OR

Multiply the hourly wage by the percentage multiplier: ____%
(*up to 50% of the hourly wage*) and add to the hourly wage for a total per hour rate.

Charge per increment: \$ _____

Overtime rate charged as stipulated by Requestor (*overtime is not used to calculate the fringe benefit cost*)

To figure the number of increments, take the *number of minutes*:
____, divide by ____-minute increments, and round down.
Enter below:

Number of increments

3a. Labor Cost

x _____ =

\$ _____

3b. Contracted Labor Cost for Separating Exempt from Non-Exempt (Redacting):

(Fill this out if using a contractor, such as the attorney. If using in-house employee, use No. 3a instead.)

The township will not charge for labor directly associated with redaction if it knows or has reason to know that it previously redacted the record in question and still has the redacted version in its possession.

This fee is being charged because failure to do so will result in unreasonably high costs to the township that are excessive and beyond the normal or usual amount for those services compared to the township's usual FOIA requests, because of the nature of the request in this particular instance, specifically: _____

As this township does not employ a person capable of separating exempt from non-exempt information in this particular instance, as determined by the FOIA Coordinator, this is the cost of labor of a **contractor** (i.e.: outside attorney), including necessary review, directly associated with separating and deleting exempt information from nonexempt information. This shall not exceed an amount equal to 6 times the state minimum hourly wage rate of ____ (*currently \$9.25*).

Name of contracted person or firm: _____

These costs will be estimated and charged in ____-minute time increments (*must be 15-minutes or more*); all partial time increments must be rounded down. *If the number of minutes is less than 15, there is no charge.*

Hourly Cost Charged: \$ _____

Charge per increment: \$ _____

To figure the number of increments, take the *number of minutes*:
____, divide by ____-minute increments, and round down to:
____ increments.
Enter below:

Number of increments

3b. Labor Cost

x _____ =

\$ _____

4. Copying / Duplication Cost:

Copying costs may be charged if a copy of a public record is requested, or for the necessary copying of a record for inspection (for example, to allow for blacking out exempt information, to protect old or delicate original records, or because the original record is a digital file or database not available for public inspection).

No more than the actual cost of a sheet of paper, up to maximum 10 cents per sheet for:

- Letter (8 1/2 x 11-inch, single and double-sided): _____ cents per sheet
- Legal (8 1/2 x 14-inch, single and double-sided): _____ cents per sheet

No more than the actual cost of a sheet of paper for other paper sizes:

- Other paper sizes (single and double-sided): _____ cents / dollars per sheet

Actual and most reasonably economical cost of non-paper physical digital media:

- **Circle applicable:** Disc / Tape / Drive / Other Digital Medium Cost per Item: _____

The cost of paper copies **must** be calculated as a total cost per sheet of paper. The fee **cannot exceed** 10 cents per sheet of paper for copies of public records made on 8-1/2- by 11-inch paper or 8-1/2- by 14-inch paper. A township must utilize the most economical means available for making copies of public records, including using double-sided printing, if cost saving and available.

Number of Sheets:

x _____ = \$ _____
 x _____ = \$ _____

Costs:

x _____ = \$ _____

No. of Items:

x _____ = \$ _____

4. Total Copy Cost

\$ _____

5. Mailing Cost:

The township will charge the actual cost of mailing, if any, for sending records in a reasonably economical and justifiable manner. Delivery confirmation is not required.

- The township **may** charge for the least expensive form of postal delivery confirmation.
- The township **cannot** charge more for expedited shipping or insurance unless specifically requested by the requestor.*

Actual Cost of Envelope or Packaging: \$ _____

Actual Cost of Postage: \$ _____ per stamp
 \$ _____ per pound
 \$ _____ per package

Actual Cost (least expensive) Postal Delivery Confirmation: \$ _____

*Expedited Shipping or Insurance as Requested: \$ _____

Number of Envelopes or Packages:

x _____ = \$ _____

Costs:

x _____ = \$ _____

5. Total Mailing Cost

\$ _____

* Requestor has requested expedited shipping or insurance

6a. Copying/Duplicating Cost for Records Already on Township's Website:

If the public body has included the website address for a record in its written response to the requestor, and the requestor thereafter stipulates that the public record be provided to him or her in a paper format or non-paper physical digital media, the township will provide the public records in the specified format and may charge copying costs to provide those copies.

No more than the actual cost of a sheet of paper, up to maximum 10 cents per sheet for:

- **Letter** (8 1/2 x 11-inch, single and double-sided): _____ cents per sheet
- **Legal** (8 1/2 x 14-inch, single and double-sided): _____ cents per sheet

No more than the actual cost of a sheet of paper for other paper sizes:

- **Other paper sizes** (single and double-sided): _____ cents / dollars per sheet

Actual and most reasonably economical cost of non-paper physical digital media:

- **Circle applicable:** Disc / Tape / Drive / Other Digital Medium Cost per Item: _____

Requestor has stipulated that some / all of the requested records that are already available on the township's website be provided in a paper or non-paper physical digital medium.

Number of Sheets:

x _____ = \$ _____
x _____ = \$ _____

Costs:

x _____ = \$ _____

No. of Items:

x _____ = \$ _____

6a. Web Copy Cost

\$ _____

6b. Labor Cost for Copying/Duplicating Records Already on Township's Website:

This shall not be more than the hourly wage of the township's lowest-paid employee capable of necessary duplication or publication in this particular instance, regardless of whether that person is available or who actually performs the labor. These costs will be estimated and charged in _____-minute time increments (i.e.: 15-minutes or more); all partial time increments must be rounded down. *If the number of minutes is less than 15, there is no charge.*

Hourly Wage Charged: \$ _____
OR

Charge per increment: \$ _____

Hourly Wage with Fringe Benefit Cost: \$ _____
Multiply the hourly wage by the percentage multiplier: _____%
and add to the hourly wage for a total per hour rate.

OR

Charge per increment: \$ _____

The township may use a fringe benefit multiplier greater than the 50% limitation, not to exceed the actual costs of providing the information in the specified format.

Overtime rate charged as stipulated by Requestor

To figure the number of increments, take the number of minutes: _____, divide by _____-minute increments, and round down. Enter below:

Number of increments

x _____ = \$ _____

6b. Web Labor Cost

6c. Mailing Cost for Records Already on Township's Website:

Actual Cost of Envelope or Packaging: \$ _____

Actual Cost of Postage: \$ _____ per stamp / per pound / per package

Actual Cost (least expensive) Postal Delivery Confirmation: \$ _____

*Expedited Shipping or Insurance as Requested: \$ _____

* Requestor has requested expedited shipping or insurance

Number:

x _____ = \$ _____

6c. Web Mailing Cost

\$ _____

Subtotal Fees Before Waivers, Discounts or Deposits:

Cost estimate
 Bill

- 1. Labor Cost for Copying: \$ _____
- 2. Labor Cost to Locate: \$ _____
- 3a. Labor Cost to Redact: \$ _____
- 3b. Contract Labor Cost to Redact: \$ _____
- 4. Copying/Duplication Cost: \$ _____
- 5. Mailing Cost: \$ _____
- 6a. Copying/Duplication of Records on Website: \$ _____
- 6b. Labor Cost for Copying Records on Website: \$ _____
- 6c. Mailing Costs for Records on Website: \$ _____

Estimated Time Frame to Provide Records:
 _____ (days or date)

The time frame estimate is nonbinding upon the township, but the township is providing the estimate in good faith. Providing an estimated time frame does not relieve the township from any of the other requirements of this act.

Subtotal Fees: \$ _____

Waiver: Public Interest

A search for a public record may be conducted or copies of public records may be furnished without charge or at a reduced charge if the township determines that a waiver or reduction of the fee is in the public interest because searching for or furnishing copies of the public record can be considered as primarily benefiting the general public.

All fees are waived **OR** All fees are reduced by: _____ %

Subtotal Fees After Waiver: \$ _____

Discount: Indigence

A public record search **must** be made and a copy of a public record **must** be furnished **without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee** for each request by an individual who is entitled to information under this act and who:

- 1) Submits an affidavit stating that the individual is indigent and receiving specific public assistance, **OR**
- 2) If not receiving public assistance, stating facts showing inability to pay the cost because of indigence.

If a requestor is ineligible for the discount, the public body shall inform the requestor specifically of the reason for ineligibility in the public body's written response. An individual is ineligible for this fee reduction if **ANY** of the following apply:

- (i) The individual has previously received discounted copies of public records from the same public body twice during that calendar year, **OR**
- (ii) The individual requests the information in conjunction with outside parties who are offering or providing payment or other remuneration to the individual to make the request. A public body may require a statement by the requestor in the affidavit that the request is not being made in conjunction with outside parties in exchange for payment or other remuneration.

Eligible for Indigence Discount

Subtotal Fees After Discount (subtract \$20): \$ _____

Discount: Nonprofit Organization

A public record search **must** be made and a copy of a public record **must** be furnished **without charge for the first \$20.00 of the fee** for each request by a nonprofit organization formally designated by the state to carry out activities under subtitle C of the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and the federal Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, if the request meets **ALL** of the following requirements:

- (i) Is made directly on behalf of the organization or its clients.
- (ii) Is made for a reason wholly consistent with the mission and provisions of those laws under section 931 of the Michigan Mental Health Code, 1974 PA 258, MCL 330.1931.
- (iii) Is accompanied by documentation of its designation by the state, if requested by the township.

Eligible for Nonprofit Discount

Subtotal Fees After Discount (subtract \$20): \$ _____

<p>Deposit: Good Faith The township may require a good-faith deposit in either its initial response or a subsequent response before providing the public records to the requestor if the entire fee estimate or charge authorized under this section exceeds \$50.00, based on a good-faith calculation of the total fee. The deposit cannot exceed 1/2 of the total estimated fee. Percent of Deposit: _____ % Date by Which Deposit Must be Received: _____ (48 days after this notice was sent)</p>	Date Paid: _____	Deposit Amount Required: \$ _____
<p>Deposit: Increased Deposit Due to Previous FOIA Fees Not Paid In Full After a township has granted and fulfilled a written request from an individual under this act, if the township has not been paid in full the total amount of fees for the copies of public records that the township made available to the individual as a result of that written request, the township may require an increased estimated fee deposit of up to 100% of the estimated fee before it begins a full public record search for any subsequent written request from that individual if ALL of the following apply:</p> <p>(a) The final fee for the prior written request was not more than 105% of the estimated fee. (b) The public records made available contained the information being sought in the prior written request and are still in the township's possession. (c) The public records were made available to the individual, subject to payment, within the best effort estimated time frame given for the previous request. (d) Ninety (90) days have passed since the township notified the individual in writing that the public records were available for pickup or mailing. (e) The individual is unable to show proof of prior payment to the township. (f) The township calculates a detailed itemization, as required under MCL 15.234, that is the basis for the current written request's increased estimated fee deposit.</p> <p>A township can no longer require an increased estimated fee deposit from an individual if ANY of the following apply:</p> <p>(a) The individual is able to show proof of prior payment in full to the township, OR (b) The township is subsequently paid in full for the applicable prior written request, OR (c) Three hundred sixty-five (365) days have passed since the individual made the written request for which full payment was not remitted to the township.</p> <p>Date by Which Deposit Must be Received: _____ (48 days after this notice is sent)</p>	Date Paid: _____	Percent Deposit Required: _____ % Deposit Required: \$ _____
<p>Late Response Labor Costs Reduction If the township does not respond to a written request in a timely manner as required under MCL 15.235(2), the township must do the following:</p> <p>(a) Reduce the charges for labor costs otherwise permitted by 5% for each day the township exceeds the time permitted for a response to the request, with a maximum 50% reduction, if EITHER of the following applies:</p> <p>(i) The late response was willful and intentional, OR</p> <p>(ii) The written request included language that conveyed a request for information within the first 250 words of the body of a letter, facsimile, electronic mail, or electronic mail attachment, or specifically included the words, characters, or abbreviations for "freedom of information," "information," "FOIA," "copy", or a recognizable misspelling of such, or appropriate legal code reference for this act, on the front of an envelope, or in the subject line of an electronic mail, letter, or facsimile cover page.</p>	Number of Days Over Required Response Time: _____ Multiply by 5% = Total Percent Reduction: _____	Total Labor Costs \$ _____ Minus Reduction \$ _____ = Reduced Total Labor Costs \$ _____
<p>The Public Summary of the township's FOIA Procedures and Guidelines is available free of charge from: Website: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____ Address: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Request Will Be Processed, But Balance Must Be Paid Before Copies May Be Picked Up, Delivered or Mailed</p>	Date Paid: _____	Total Balance Due: \$ _____

ATTACHMENT C

[This page left blank on purpose for double-sided printing.]

Township: Keep original and provide copy, along with Public Summary, to requestor at no charge.

Saugatuck Township, Allegan County
3461 Blue Star Hwy, PO Box 100
Saugatuck, MI 49453
Phone: 269-857-7721

Extension Form

Notice to Extend Response Time for FOIA Request
Michigan Freedom of Information Act, Public Act 442 of 1976, MCL 15.231, et seq.

Request No.: _____ **Date Received:** _____ **Check if received via:** Email Fax Other Electronic Method
Date of This Notice: _____ **Date delivered to junk/spam folder:** _____
(Please Print or Type) **Date discovered in junk/spam folder:** _____

Name	Phone
Firm/Organization	Fax
Street	Email
City	State Zip

Request for: Copy Certified copy Record inspection Subscription to record issued on regular basis
Delivery Method: Will pick up Will make own copies onsite Mail to address above Email to address above
 Deliver on digital media provided by the township: _____

Record(s) You Requested: (Listed here or see attached copy of original request) _____

We are extending the date to respond to your FOIA request for no more than 10 business days, until _____ (month, day, year).
Only one extension may be taken per FOIA request. If you have any questions regarding this extension, contact _____ at _____

Estimated Time Frame to Respond: _____ (days or date)

The time frame estimate is nonbinding upon the township, but the township is providing the estimate in good faith. Providing an estimated time frame does not relieve a public body from any of the other requirements of this act.

Reason for Extension:

1. The township needs to search for, collect, or appropriately examine or review a voluminous amount of separate and distinct public records pursuant to your request. Specifically, the township must:

2. The township needs to collect the requested public records from numerous field offices, facilities, or other establishments that are located apart from the township office. Specifically, the township must coordinate documents from the following locations:

3. Other (describe): _____

Signature of FOIA Coordinator:

Date:

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ATTACHMENT D

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Township: Keep original and provide copy of both sides, along with Public Summary, to requestor at no charge.

Saugatuck Township, Allegan County
3461 Blue Star Hwy, PO Box 100
Saugatuck, MI 49453
Phone: 269-857-7721

Denial Form

Notice of Denial of FOIA Request

Michigan Freedom of Information Act, Public Act 442 of 1976, MCL 15.231, et seq.

Request No.: _____ **Date Received:** _____ Check if received via: Email Fax Other Electronic Method
Date of This Notice: _____ **Date delivered to junk/spam folder:** _____
(Please Print or Type) **Date discovered in junk/spam folder:** _____

Name	Phone
Firm/Organization	Fax
Street	Email
City	State Zip

Request for: Copy Certified copy Record inspection Subscription to record issued on regular basis

Delivery Method: Will pick up Will make own copies onsite Mail to address above Email to address above
 Deliver on digital media provided by the township: _____

Record(s) You Requested: *(Listed here or see attached copy of original request)* _____

All OR **Part** of your request for records has been denied. Please refer to this form for an explanation. If you have any questions regarding this denial, contact _____ at _____
Partial Denial: Estimated Time Frame to Respond: _____ *(days or date)*. The time frame estimate is nonbinding upon the township, but the township is providing the estimate in good faith. Providing an estimated time frame does not relieve a public body from any of the other requirements of this act.

Reason for Denial:

1. Exempt from Disclosure: This item is exempt from disclosure under FOIA Section 13, Subsection _____ *(insert number)*, because: _____

2. Record Does Not Exist: This item does not exist under the name provided in your request or by another name reasonably known to the township. A certificate that the public record does not exist under the name given is attached. If you believe this record does exist, provide a description that will enable us to locate the record: _____

3. Redaction: A portion of the requested record had to be separated or deleted (redacted) as it is exempt under FOIA Section 13, Subsection _____ *(insert number)*, because: _____

A brief description of the information that had to be separated or deleted: _____

Notice of Requestor's Right to Seek Judicial Review

You are entitled under Section 10 of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, MCL 15.240, to appeal this denial to the township board or to commence an action in the Circuit Court to compel disclosure of the requested records if you believe they were wrongfully withheld from disclosure. If, after judicial review, the court determines that the township has not complied with MCL 15.235 in making this denial and orders disclosure of all or a portion of a public record, you have the right to receive attorneys' fees and damages as provided in MCL 15.240. *(See back of this form for additional information on your rights.)*

Signature of FOIA Coordinator: _____

Date: _____

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (EXCERPT)

Act 442 of 1976

15.240 Options by requesting person; appeal; actions by public body; receipt of written appeal; judicial review; civil action; venue; de novo proceeding; burden of proof; private view of public record; contempt; assignment of action or appeal for hearing, trial, or argument; attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements; assessment of award; damages.

Sec. 10.

(1) If a public body makes a final determination to deny all or a portion of a request, the requesting person may do 1 of the following at his or her option:

(a) Submit to the head of the public body a written appeal that specifically states the word "appeal" and identifies the reason or reasons for reversal of the denial.

(b) Commence a civil action in the circuit court, or if the decision of a state public body is at issue, the court of claims, to compel the public body's disclosure of the public records within 180 days after a public body's final determination to deny a request.

(2) Within 10 business days after receiving a written appeal pursuant to subsection (1)(a), the head of a public body shall do 1 of the following:

(a) Reverse the disclosure denial.

(b) Issue a written notice to the requesting person upholding the disclosure denial.

(c) Reverse the disclosure denial in part and issue a written notice to the requesting person upholding the disclosure denial in part.

(d) Under unusual circumstances, issue a notice extending for not more than 10 business days the period during which the head of the public body shall respond to the written appeal. The head of a public body shall not issue more than 1 notice of extension for a particular written appeal.

(3) A board or commission that is the head of a public body is not considered to have received a written appeal under subsection (2) until the first regularly scheduled meeting of that board or commission following submission of the written appeal under subsection (1)(a). If the head of the public body fails to respond to a written appeal pursuant to subsection (2), or if the head of the public body upholds all or a portion of the disclosure denial that is the subject of the written appeal, the requesting person may seek judicial review of the nondisclosure by commencing a civil action under subsection (1)(b).

(4) In an action commenced under subsection (1)(b), a court that determines a public record is not exempt from disclosure shall order the public body to cease withholding or to produce all or a portion of a public record wrongfully withheld, regardless of the location of the public record. Venue for an action against a local public body is proper in the circuit court for the county in which the public record or an office of the public body is located has venue over the action. The court shall determine the matter de novo and the burden is on the public body to sustain its denial. The court, on its own motion, may view the public record in controversy in private before reaching a decision. Failure to comply with an order of the court may be punished as contempt of court.

(5) An action commenced under this section and an appeal from an action commenced under this section shall be assigned for hearing and trial or for argument at the earliest practicable date and expedited in every way.

(6) If a person asserting the right to inspect, copy, or receive a copy of all or a portion of a public record prevails in an action commenced under this section, the court shall award reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements. If the person or public body prevails in part, the court may, in its discretion, award all or an appropriate portion of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements. The award shall be assessed against the public body liable for damages under subsection (7).

(7) If the court determines in an action commenced under this section that the public body has arbitrarily and capriciously violated this act by refusal or delay in disclosing or providing copies of a public record, the court shall order the public body to pay a civil fine of \$1,000.00, which shall be deposited into the general fund of the state treasury. The court shall award, in addition to any actual or compensatory damages, punitive damages in the amount of \$1,000.00 to the person seeking the right to inspect or receive a copy of a public record. The damages shall not be assessed against an individual, but shall be assessed against the next succeeding public body that is not an individual and that kept or maintained the public record as part of its public function.

History: 1976, Act 442, Eff. Apr. 13, 1977 ;-- Am. 1978, Act 329, Imd. Eff. July 11, 1978 ;-- Am. 1996, Act 553, Eff. Mar. 31, 1997 ;-- Am. 2014, Act 563, Eff. July 1, 2015

ATTACHMENT E

[This page left blank on purpose for double-sided printing.]

Township: Keep original and provide copy of both sides, along with Public Summary, to requestor at no charge.

Saugatuck Township, Allegan County
3461 Blue Star Hwy, PO Box 100
Saugatuck, MI 49453
Phone: 269-857-7721

Denial Appeal Form

FOIA Appeal Form—To Appeal a Denial of Records

Michigan Freedom of Information Act, Public Act 442 of 1976, MCL 15.231, et seq.

Request No.: _____ **Date Received:** _____ Check if received via: Email Fax Other Electronic Method
Date of This Notice: _____ **Date delivered to junk/spam folder:** _____
(Please Print or Type) **Date discovered in junk/spam folder:** _____

Name	Phone
Firm/Organization	Fax
Street	Email
City	State Zip

Request for: Copy Certified copy Record inspection Subscription to record issued on regular basis
Delivery Method: Will pick up Will make own copies onsite Mail to address above Email to address above
 Deliver on digital media provided by the township: _____

Record(s) You Requested: *(Listed here or see attached copy of original request)* _____

Reason(s) for Appeal:

The appeal must identify the reason(s) for reversing the denial. You may use this form or attach additional sheets:

Requestor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Township Response:

The township must provide a response within 10 business days after receiving this appeal, including a determination or taking one 10-business day extension.

Township Extension: We are extending the date to respond to your FOIA denial appeal for no more than 10 business days, until _____ (month, day, year). Only one extension may be taken per FOIA appeal.

Unusual circumstances warranting extension: _____

If you have any questions regarding this extension, contact: _____

Township Determination:

Denial Reversed Denial Upheld Denial Reversed in Part and Upheld in Part

The following previously denied records will be released: _____

Notice of Requestor's Right to Seek Judicial Review

You are entitled under Section 10 of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, MCL 15.240, to appeal this denial to the township board or to commence an action in the Circuit Court to compel disclosure of the requested records if you believe they were wrongfully withheld from disclosure. If, after judicial review, the court determines that the township has not complied with MCL 15.235 in making this denial and orders disclosure of all or a portion of a public record, you have the right to receive attorneys' fees and damages as provided in MCL 15.240. (See back of this form for additional information on your rights.)

Signature of FOIA Coordinator: _____

Date: _____

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (EXCERPT)

Act 442 of 1976

15.240 Options by requesting person; appeal; actions by public body; receipt of written appeal; judicial review; civil action; venue; de novo proceeding; burden of proof; private view of public record; contempt; assignment of action or appeal for hearing, trial, or argument; attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements; assessment of award; damages.

Sec. 10.

(1) If a public body makes a final determination to deny all or a portion of a request, the requesting person may do 1 of the following at his or her option:

(a) Submit to the head of the public body a written appeal that specifically states the word "appeal" and identifies the reason or reasons for reversal of the denial.

(b) Commence a civil action in the circuit court, or if the decision of a state public body is at issue, the court of claims, to compel the public body's disclosure of the public records within 180 days after a public body's final determination to deny a request.

(2) Within 10 business days after receiving a written appeal pursuant to subsection (1)(a), the head of a public body shall do 1 of the following:

(a) Reverse the disclosure denial.

(b) Issue a written notice to the requesting person upholding the disclosure denial.

(c) Reverse the disclosure denial in part and issue a written notice to the requesting person upholding the disclosure denial in part.

(d) Under unusual circumstances, issue a notice extending for not more than 10 business days the period during which the head of the public body shall respond to the written appeal. The head of a public body shall not issue more than 1 notice of extension for a particular written appeal.

(3) A board or commission that is the head of a public body is not considered to have received a written appeal under subsection (2) until the first regularly scheduled meeting of that board or commission following submission of the written appeal under subsection (1)(a). If the head of the public body fails to respond to a written appeal pursuant to subsection (2), or if the head of the public body upholds all or a portion of the disclosure denial that is the subject of the written appeal, the requesting person may seek judicial review of the nondisclosure by commencing a civil action under subsection (1)(b).

(4) In an action commenced under subsection (1)(b), a court that determines a public record is not exempt from disclosure shall order the public body to cease withholding or to produce all or a portion of a public record wrongfully withheld, regardless of the location of the public record. Venue for an action against a local public body is proper in the circuit court for the county in which the public record or an office of the public body is located has venue over the action. The court shall determine the matter de novo and the burden is on the public body to sustain its denial. The court, on its own motion, may view the public record in controversy in private before reaching a decision. Failure to comply with an order of the court may be punished as contempt of court.

(5) An action commenced under this section and an appeal from an action commenced under this section shall be assigned for hearing and trial or for argument at the earliest practicable date and expedited in every way.

(6) If a person asserting the right to inspect, copy, or receive a copy of all or a portion of a public record prevails in an action commenced under this section, the court shall award reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements. If the person or public body prevails in part, the court may, in its discretion, award all or an appropriate portion of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements. The award shall be assessed against the public body liable for damages under subsection (7).

(7) If the court determines in an action commenced under this section that the public body has arbitrarily and capriciously violated this act by refusal or delay in disclosing or providing copies of a public record, the court shall order the public body to pay a civil fine of \$1,000.00, which shall be deposited into the general fund of the state treasury. The court shall award, in addition to any actual or compensatory damages, punitive damages in the amount of \$1,000.00 to the person seeking the right to inspect or receive a copy of a public record. The damages shall not be assessed against an individual, but shall be assessed against the next succeeding public body that is not an individual and that kept or maintained the public record as part of its public function.

History: 1976, Act 442, Eff. Apr. 13, 1977 ;-- Am. 1978, Act 329, Imd. Eff. July 11, 1978 ;-- Am. 1996, Act 553, Eff. Mar. 31, 1997 ;-- Am. 2014, Act 563, Eff. July 1, 2015.

ATTACHMENT F

[This page left blank on purpose for double-sided printing.]

Township: Keep original and provide copy of both sides, along with Public Summary, to requestor at no charge.

Saugatuck Township, Allegan County
3461 Blue Star Hwy, PO Box 100
Saugatuck, MI 49453
Phone: 269-857-7721

Fee Appeal Form

FOIA Appeal Form—To Appeal an Excess Fee

Michigan Freedom of Information Act, Public Act 442 of 1976, MCL 15.231, et seq.

Request No.: _____ **Date Received:** _____ Check if received via: Email Fax Other Electronic Method
Date of This Notice: _____ **Date delivered to junk/spam folder:** _____
(Please Print or Type) **Date discovered in junk/spam folder:** _____

Name	Phone	
Firm/Organization	Fax	
Street	Email	
City	State	Zip

Request for: Copy Certified copy Record inspection Subscription to record issued on regular basis
Delivery Method: Will pick up Will make own copies onsite Mail to address above Email to address above
 Deliver on digital media provided by the township: _____

Record(s) You Requested: *(Listed here or see attached copy of original request)* _____

Reason(s) for Appeal:

The appeal must specifically identify how the required fee(s) exceed the amount permitted. You may use this form or attach additional sheets:

Requestor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Township Response:

The township must provide a response within 10 business days after receiving this appeal, including a determination or taking one 10-business day extension.

Township Extension: We are extending the date to respond to your FOIA fee appeal for no more than 10 business days, until _____
(month, day, year). Only one extension may be taken per FOIA appeal.

Unusual circumstances warranting extension: _____

If you have any questions regarding this extension, contact: _____

Township Determination: Fee Waived Fee Reduced Fee Upheld

Written basis for township determination: _____

Notice of Requestor's Right to Seek Judicial Review

You are entitled under Section 10a of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, MCL 15.240a, to appeal a FOIA fee that you believe exceeds the amount permitted under the township's written Procedures and Guidelines to the township board or to commence an action in the Circuit Court for a fee reduction within 45 days after receiving the notice of the required fee or a determination of an appeal to the township board. If a civil action is commenced in court, the township is not obligated to compete processing the request until the court resolves the fee dispute. If the court determines that the township required a fee that exceeded the permitted amount, the court shall reduce the fee to a permissible amount. (See back of this form for additional information on your rights.)

Signature of FOIA Coordinator: _____ **Date:** _____

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 442 of 1976

15.240a Fee in excess of amount permitted under procedures and guidelines or MCL 15.234.

Sec. 10a.

(1) If a public body requires a fee that exceeds the amount permitted under its publicly available procedures and guidelines or section 4, the requesting person may do any of the following:

(a) If the public body provides for fee appeals to the head of the public body in its publicly available procedures and guidelines, submit to the head of the public body a written appeal for a fee reduction that specifically states the word "appeal" and identifies how the required fee exceeds the amount permitted under the public body's available procedures and guidelines or section 4.

(b) Commence a civil action in the circuit court, or if the decision of a state public body is at issue, in the court of claims, for a fee reduction. The action must be filed within 45 days after receiving the notice of the required fee or a determination of an appeal to the head of a public body. If a civil action is commenced against the public body under this subdivision, the public body is not obligated to complete the processing of the written request for the public record at issue until the court resolves the fee dispute. An action shall not be filed under this subdivision unless 1 of the following applies:

(i) The public body does not provide for appeals under subdivision (a).

(ii) The head of the public body failed to respond to a written appeal as required under subsection (2).

(iii) The head of the public body issued a determination to a written appeal as required under subsection (2).

(2) Within 10 business days after receiving a written appeal under subsection (1)(a), the head of a public body shall do 1 of the following:

(a) Waive the fee.

(b) Reduce the fee and issue a written determination to the requesting person indicating the specific basis under section 4 that supports the remaining fee. The determination shall include a certification from the head of the public body that the statements in the determination are accurate and that the reduced fee amount complies with its publicly available procedures and guidelines and section 4.

(c) Uphold the fee and issue a written determination to the requesting person indicating the specific basis under section 4 that supports the required fee. The determination shall include a certification from the head of the public body that the statements in the determination are accurate and that the fee amount complies with the public body's publicly available procedures and guidelines and section 4.

(d) Issue a notice extending for not more than 10 business days the period during which the head of the public body must respond to the written appeal. The notice of extension shall include a detailed reason or reasons why the extension is necessary. The head of a public body shall not issue more than 1 notice of extension for a particular written appeal.

(3) A board or commission that is the head of a public body is not considered to have received a written appeal under subsection (2) until the first regularly scheduled meeting of that board or commission following submission of the written appeal under subsection (1)(a).

(4) In an action commenced under subsection (1)(b), a court that determines the public body required a fee that exceeds the amount permitted under its publicly available procedures and guidelines or section 4 shall reduce the fee to a permissible amount. Venue for an action against a local public body is proper in the circuit court for the county in which the public record or an office of the public body is located. The court shall determine the matter de novo, and the burden is on the public body to establish that the required fee complies with its publicly available procedures and guidelines and section 4. Failure to comply with an order of the court may be punished as contempt of court.

(5) An action commenced under this section and an appeal from an action commenced under this section shall be assigned for hearing and trial or for argument at the earliest practicable date and expedited in every way.

(6) If the requesting person prevails in an action commenced under this section by receiving a reduction of 50% or more of the total fee, the court may, in its discretion, award all or an appropriate portion of reasonable attorneys' fees, costs, and disbursements. The award shall be assessed against the public body liable for damages under subsection (7).

(7) If the court determines in an action commenced under this section that the public body has arbitrarily and capriciously violated this act by charging an excessive fee, the court shall order the public body to pay a civil fine of \$500.00, which shall be deposited in the general fund of the state treasury. The court may also award, in addition to any actual or compensatory damages, punitive damages in the amount of \$500.00 to the person seeking the fee reduction. The fine and any damages shall not be assessed against an individual, but shall be assessed against the next succeeding public body that is not an individual and that kept or maintained the public record as part of its public function.

(8) As used in this section, "fee" means the total fee or any component of the total fee calculated under section 4, including any deposit.

History: Add. 2014, Act 563, Eff. July 1, 2015