

ACLU ACTIVIST TIPS

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR GOVERNMENT



DID YOU KNOW?

You can write a request for information – whether it's budgets, police reports, policies, emails, bail schedules – and in many cases the governmental agency is required by law to hand it over.

Public records laws are an invaluable tool for activists. **Don't let them go unused.**

There are some exceptions, so visit [ACLUOhio.org/PublicRecords](https://www.acluohio.org/PublicRecords) for a step-by-step guide, including a sample request letter you can use.

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AT A GLANCE:

- Ohio's laws are called public/open records laws or sunshine laws. You can request documents from state and local agencies, including jails, city councils, school boards, and the prison system.
- Federal agencies are covered by the *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)*. Court records are generally available under the Rules of Superintendence for the Courts of Ohio.
- You can send a request, whether or not you are a resident of that municipality or a citizen.
- Common exceptions include medical records, personnel records, and active law enforcement investigations.
- If you feel that a court has wrongfully withheld records from you, you can file a complaint and petition for writ of mandamus.

See our step-by-step guide for more details:
[ACLUOhio.org/PublicRecords](https://acluohio.org/PublicRecords)

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