Data Practices Policy
for Members of the Public

Right to Access Public Data

The Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13) presumes that all government data are public unless a state or federal law says the data are not public. Government data means all recorded information that a government entity has, including paper and electronic documents.

The Governor’s Office (“office”) must keep government data in a way that makes it easy to access public data. You have the right to inspect public data and the right to receive copies of public data. The Data Practices Act allows us to charge for copies.

The Government Data Practices Act does not require us to create or collect new data in response to a data request, or to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if the requested form is not the original format. In addition, the Government Data Practices Act does not require us to answer questions that are not requests for data.

How to Make a Data Request

To inspect data or request copies of data that this office keeps, your request must be made in writing. Make your request for data to the appropriate individual listed as the Data Practices Contact below. You may make your request for data by mail or email.

A request should include the following:

- You are making a request for data under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13);
- A clear and specific description of the data requested;
- Your preference to either inspect the data, receive physical copies of the data, or receive electronic copies via email.

As a member of the public, you are not required to identify yourself or explain the reason for your data request. However, depending on how you want us to process your request (if, for example, you want us to mail you copies of data), we may need some information about you. If we do not understand your request and have no way to contact you, we cannot respond to your request.
How Our Office Responds to a Data Request

Upon receiving your request, we will review it.

- We may ask you to clarify what data you are requesting.
- If we do not have the data, we will notify you in writing as soon as reasonably possible.
- If we have the data but are not able to share it, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and identify the law that prevents us from providing the data.
- If we have the data, and the data are public, we will respond to your request appropriately and promptly, within a reasonable amount of time by doing one of the following:
  - provide you with copies of the data via email, or
  - arrange a date, time, and place to inspect data at our offices, or
  - arrange a date and time for you to pick up physical copies, or we will mail them to you.
- Response time will vary depending on the size and scope of your request and the number of requests our office has received in a given time period.

Our office will send notice to a requestor when their data is available. We will send two reminders after the initial notice, and the request will be cancelled if no response is received within one month of the second reminder. Additionally, our office will retain data responsive to your data request for 30 days. The 30 days starts on the day the data is provided or the request is cancelled.

Costs related to data requests

Minnesota Statutes, section 13.03, subdivision 3(c) allows us to charge for copies.

- For 100 or fewer paper copies – 25 cents a page
  - 100 or fewer pages of black and white, paper copies cost 25 cents for a one-sided copy, or 50 cents for a two-sided copy.
- Most other types of copies – actual cost
  - Costs for other types of copies, including electronic copies sent via email, are the “actual costs” of employee time to search for, retrieve, and transmit data, and any cost of materials or mailing costs.
- Costs must be paid in advance of receiving data. If payment is not received within 30 days of the second reminder, the request will be cancelled.

Data Practices Contact

Contact: Jake Smith, Deputy General Counsel

Email: jake.smith@state.mn.us

Address: 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Suite 130
         Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155