

Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)

Data Practices Policy for Members of the Public

Right to access public data

The 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 is a term that means all recorded information a government entity has, including paper, email, flash drives, CDs, DVDs, photographs, etc.

The Minnesota POST Board is a licensing agency and as such, there are specific conditions in Minnesota Statute, Chapter 13.41 that apply to the licensing data that the POST Board maintains on peace officers and peace officer candidates.

The Government Data Practices Act also provides that this government entity must keep all government data in a way that makes it easy for you, as a member of the public, to access public data. You have the right to look at (inspect), free of charge, all public data that we keep. You also have the right to get copies of public data. The Government Data Practices Act allows us to charge for copies. You have the right to look at data, free of charge, before deciding to request copies.

How to make a data request

You can look at data, or request copies of data that this government entity keeps. Make your request for data to Jon Hoff, Assistant Executive Director, Minnesota POST Board, 1600 University Avenue, Suite 200, St. Paul, MN 55104 or to postboard.agency.docs@state.mn.us. You may make your request by mail or email. You must make your request in writing. Your request should include:

- You are making a request for public data under the Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13).
- Whether you would like to inspect the data, have copies of the data, or both.
- A clear description of the data you would like to inspect or have copied.

This government entity cannot require you, as a member of the public, 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 you choose not to give us any identifying information, we will provide you with contact information so you may check on the status of your request. In addition, please keep in mind that if we do not understand your request and have no way to contact you, we will not be able to begin processing your request.

How we respond to a data request

Upon receiving your request, we will work to process it.

- If it is not clear what data you are requesting, we will ask you for clarification. If we do not have the data, we will notify you in writing within 10 business days.

- If we have the data, but the data are not public, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and state which specific law says the data are not public.
- 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:
 - Arrange a date, time, and place to inspect data, for free, if your request is to look at the data, or
 - Provide you with copies of the data as soon as reasonably possible. You may choose to pick up your copies, or we will mail them to you. We will provide electronic copies (such as email or CD-ROM) upon request if we keep the data in electronic format.
 - If you do not understand some of the data (technical terminology, abbreviations, or acronyms), please let us know. We will give you an explanation if you ask.

The Government Data Practices Act does not require us to create or collect new data in response to a data request if we do not already have the data, or to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if we do not keep the data in that form or arrangement (for example, if the data you request are on paper only, we are not required to create electronic documents to respond to your request). If we agree to create data in response to your request, we will work with you on the details of your request, including cost and response time.

In addition, we are not required under the Government Data Practices Act to respond to questions that are not specific requests for data.

Copy Costs – Members of the Public

The POST Board may charge for copies of government data. These charges are authorized under Minnesota Statutes, section 13.03, subdivision 3(c). You will be notified of any costs (exact change is required) that must be prepaid before data is released.

- 0-100 pages: 25 cents per page
- Beyond 100 pages: Actual costs to search, retrieve and make paper copies.

Summary data

Summary data are statistical records or reports that are prepared by removing all identifiers from private or confidential data on individuals. The preparation of summary data is not a means to gain access to private or confidential data. We will prepare summary data if you make your request in writing and pre-pay for the cost of creating the data.

Upon receiving your written request we will respond within 10 business days with the data or details of when the data will be ready and how much we will charge.