Thank you for your gift of postage.

**NEBRASKANS’ RIGHT TO KNOW**

EVERY NEBRASKAN HAS THE RIGHT TO ACCESS OUR GOVERNMENT. We, the people, are self-governed, so government data and meetings are accessible to all of us. We appreciate those who serve the public and when we want or need access to this information, the responsibility is ours to get it.

**NEBRASKA GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

Agencies handle the bulk of government work in Nebraska, and so have most of the records one would seek to acquire through a request.

- Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles
- Department of Labor
- Board of Parole
- Nebraska Child Support
- Department of Education
- Nebraska Department of Transportation
- State Treasurer
- University of Nebraska
- Workers’ Compensation Court
- Nebraska Department of Veterans’ Affairs

TO FIND EVERY NEBRASKA AGENCY AND ITS CORRESPONDING ADDRESS: http://www.nebraska.gov/agencies/

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

- facebook.com/CommonCauseNebraska
- twitter.com/CommonCauseNE
- www.commoncause.org/nebraska

Common Cause Nebraska
PO Box 94662
Lincoln, NE 68509-4662
**Rules for All Open Meetings**

**WHO:** The rules cover most public bodies in Nebraska.

**WHAT:** These rules apply to meetings that are intentionally convened, regular or special.

**NOTICE:** Must transmit reasonable advance notice to the public in some format both time and place of meetings.

**AGENDA:** Must be made available to the public and changed no later than 24 hours before the meeting. Emergency items can be included in the agenda at the meeting.

**Your Rights in An Open Meeting**

**ATTEND:** Your right to be at the meeting is almost always guaranteed.

**SPEAK:** Public comment is required, even if it’s not at every meeting of the body.

**RECORD:** Feel free to capture the proceedings, other than closed or executive sessions.

**ANONYMITY:** You don’t have to identify yourself to attend. May have to give your name and other information to speak.

**POST THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT:** The whole document will be there for your use at the meeting.

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**ACCESS:** They’ll make an effort for the public to be able to hear all testimony and proceedings.

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**OPEN RECORDS**

**What to Know Before You Request Documents**

**WILL THIS COST ME?**
You can be charged for the time and production of the records you want. But Nebraska law specifically protects you from unreasonable fees.

**HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?**
If the documents you requested can’t be produced within four days, the agency will send you an explanation, as well as a predicted time frame and an opportunity to modify your request.

**Questions to answer when obtaining government records:**

**WHO HAS THAT DOCUMENT?**
Which agency or department created that piece of information or stores it.

**IS MY DOCUMENT ALREADY AVAILABLE ONLINE?**
Many government offices are making the move to hosting their files online and offering them directly to the public. Before making a request, it’s often a smart move to check there first.

**WHAT OTHER DOCUMENTS MIGHT BE RELATED TO WHAT YOU’RE LOOKING FOR?**
An important consideration when you’re seeking to answer a question, rather than particular document.

**Records Restrictions**

While you can get most any document that the state has created, there are important exceptions that have been made to protect certain documents.

Here are a few noteworthy examples:

- Trade secrets
- Attorney work product related to ongoing litigation
- Medical records
- Most personal information other than state salaries
- For a full list see Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-712.05

**Appealing a Record Request**

Whether it’s because your request was denied unfairly or because the fee was untenable, you have the option to appeal the decision with the Attorney General.

To do so, submit a letter explaining your complaint, along with a copy of your initial records request to the address below.

The Attorney General has 15 calendar days to determine whether your claim has merit.

Nebraska Attorney General
2115 State Capitol
Lincoln, NE 68509

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