

Data Practices Policy

Public Information



Nobles County, Minnesota
www.co.nobles.mn.us
November 22, 2016

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, DVDs, photographs, etc.

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

To look at data or request copies of data that this government entity keeps, make a *written request*. Make your request for data to the appropriate Responsible Authority (RA) listed in the Data Practices Contacts on page 4 of this document, or you may make your request for data by mail to: Administration Office at 315 Tenth St., Worthington, MN 56187, or email at: administration@co.nobles.mn.us, using the data request form starting on Page 5 of this document, on our website at: www.co.nobles.mn.us, or picking it up at the address above. We do not accept requests in other forms unless the substantial requirements of our form are met within your written request. The fee schedule for this data request is on page 7 of this form.

Nobles County 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, Nobles County staff will work to process it. If it is not clear what data you are requesting, we will ask you for clarification. If there will be a charge for the data, the requestor must pay for the data prior to the County staff working on the request.

- If we do not have the data, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible.
- 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 or fax them to you. If you want us to send you the copies, you will need to provide us with an address or fax number. We will provide electronic copies (such as email or CD-ROM) upon request if we keep the data in electronic format.

- If the data request is for large amounts of data or complex data we will respond within ten (10) business days with an estimated time it will take us to prepare the data.

If you do not understand some of the data (technical terminology, abbreviations, or acronyms), please let us know, we will provide you an explanation.

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, the Government Data Practices Act does not require us to answer questions that are not requests for data.

Requests for 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/pay for the cost of creating the data. Upon receiving your written request, using our request form, we will respond within ten (10) business days with the data or details of when the data will be ready and how much the cost will be.

Data Practices Contacts for Nobles County

Office	Responsible Authority	Designees
Nobles County Auditor/Treasurer	Joyce Jacobs, Auditor/Treasurer 315 Tenth Street, PO Box 757 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5257; Fax 507-372-8390 ijacobs@co.nobles.mn.us	
Nobles County Attorney	Braden Hoefert, County Attorney 1530 Airport Rd STE 400 PO Box 337 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5298, Fax 507-372-8439 bhoefert@co.nobles.mn.us	
Nobles County Recorder	Thelma Yager, County Recorder 315 Tenth Street, PO Box 757 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5268, Fax 507-372-8235 tlyager@co.nobles.mn.us	
Nobles County Sheriff	Ryan Kruger, Sheriff 1530 Airport Rd STE 100 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5400, Fax 507-372-5977 rkruger@co.nobles.mn.us	
Nobles County Community Services	Stacie Golombiecki, Community Services Director 318 9 th Street, PO Box 189 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5213, Fax 507-372-5094 sgolombiecki@co.nobles.mn.us	
All other County Offices	Bruce Heitkamp County Administrator 315 Tenth Street, PO Box 757 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5201, Fax 507-372-8363 bheitkamp@co.nobles.mn.us	Sue Luing Human Resources 315 Tenth Street, PO Box 757 Worthington MN 56187 507-295-5201, Fax 507-372-8363 sluing@co.nobles.mn.us

Data Practices Compliance Official

Braden Hoefert, County Attorney
1530 Airport Rd STE 400
PO Box 337
Worthington MN 56187
507-295-5298, Fax 507-372-8439
bhoefert@co.nobles.mn.us

Place a (✓) next to the best option that suits your needs.

COPY

I would like a copy of the requested information. I understand that I must pay the appropriate fees as stated below.

TYPE OF COPY

- Paper Copies
 Electronic Copies scanned and saved to a CD or emailed

Delivery Method

- PICK UP** I will pick up the information requested. Please contact me at the phone number listed above when documents are ready.
- MAIL** Please mail the information to me at the address listed above.
- EMAIL** Please email the information at the email address listed above.

Fee schedules for the above requested 'COPY' are included at the end of this documents

IN-PERSON REVIEW

I do not want copies but I wish to inspect the originals of the requested information. Please call me at the telephone number listed above to schedule a time when records will be available for viewing.

There is no charge for an in-person inspection of documents.

In making this request, I understand that:

- Nobles County is under no obligation to create a document that does not already exist.
- Items expressly confidential under law will not be disclosed (refer to the Minnesota Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13 for more information).
- Nobles County will provide the requested information as expediently as possible. Depending upon the type of information requested it may take an extended time to process. If the requested information is time sensitive, please indicate that above and the Nobles County will make every effort to comply.

Signature of Requestor: _____ Date: _____

Request received by: _____ Date: _____

Employee Signature: _____

FEE SCHEDULE FOR DATA REQUESTS

Fees for Data Requests

The Nobles County charges members of the public for copies of government data. These charges are authorized under Minnesota Statutes, Section 13.03, Subdivision 3(c). You must pay for the copies or scans before we will make them and release them to you.

100 or fewer pages of black and white, letter or legal size paper copies cost 25 cents per page, more than 100 pages it will be the actual cost, including staff time.

The charge for most other types of copies, when a charge is not set by statute or rule, is the actual cost of searching for and retrieving the data, and making the copies or electronically transmitting the data (e.g. sending the data by email).

In determining the actual cost of making copies, we factor in employee time, the cost of materials onto which we are copying materials (paper, flash drive, CD, DVD, etc.), and mailing costs (if any).

If your request is for copies of data that we cannot reproduce ourselves, such as photographs, plans or maps, we will charge you the actual cost we must pay an outside vendor for the copies.

The cost of employee time to search for data, retrieve data, and make copies is subject to change based on the employees wage from the department the information is requested from.

If, because of the subject matter of your request, we find it necessary for a higher-paid employee to search for and retrieve data, we will calculate the search and retrieval portion of the copy charge at the higher salary/wage.

Revision History

Original Adoption, October 4, 2016

Revision 1, November 22, 2016

- 1) Formalizes Elected officials as the Responsible Authority for their respective departments.
- 2) Consistent fonts throughout
- 3) Inclusion of request forms as a part of the document
- 4) Miscellaneous improvements and clarifications