

Guide for Members of the Public Requesting Government Data

Right to Access Public Data

The Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13) presumes that all government data is public unless a state or federal law says the data is not public. Government data is a term that means all recorded information a government has, including paper, email, CD's, DVDs, photographs, etc.

The Government Data Practices Act also provides that Norman County must keep all government data in 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.

Access to Private or Non-Public Data

Private or non-public data contains information which pursuant to law is available only to the individual subject of the data, and to employees of Norman County whose work necessitates access to the data. Individuals seeking access to private or non-public data from Norman County may obtain the data by completing the data request form. Norman County shall require reasonable identification from the individual who seeks review of the data in order to verify that the individual is the subject of the data.

How to Make a Data Request

To look at data or request copies of data that Norman County keeps, make a written request. Make your request for data to the Norman County Data Practices Officer or the department designee:

Elizabeth Brainard
Norman County Attorney
16 3rd Ave E, Ste 101B • Ada, MN 56510
218-784-5456
liz.brainard@co.norman.mn.us

Norman County Designees

As authorized by Minn. Stat. §13.03, Subd. 2, the following persons have been designated by Elizabeth Brainard as the designees to receive and comply with requests for government data in their respective departments:

County Attorney	Elizabeth Brainard	liz.brainard@co.norman.mn.us
Auditor/Treasurer	Amanda Riegert	amanda.riegert@co.norman.mn.us
Recorder's Office	Stacy Erickson	stacy.erickson@co.norman.mn.us
Assessor	Marti Sip	marti.sip@co.norman.mn.us
Social Services	Nancy Rhen	nancy.rhen@co.norman.mn.us
Highway	Keith Berndt	keith.berndt@co.norman.mn.us
Sheriff's Office	Ben Fall	sheriff@co.norman.mn.us

You may make your request for data in person, by mail, by fax, or by email, using the data request form on page 5.

If you choose not to use the data request form, your request should include:

- That you, as a member of the public, are making a request for data under the Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13;
- Whether you would like to look at the data, get copies of the data, or both; and
- A clear description of the data you would like to inspect or have copied.

Norman County cannot require you to identify yourself or explain the reason for your public 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 statutes 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 we do not have the data, we will notify you in writing, if possible, as soon as reasonably possible.
- If we have the data, but the data is not public, we will notify you as soon as reasonably possible and state which specific law says the data is not public.
- If we have the data, and the data is 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 data, or
- Once payment has been made, we 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 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 is on paper only, we are not required to create electronic documents to respond to your request.) 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 information that would identify 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. You may use the data request form to make your request. Upon receiving your written requests for summary data we will respond within ten business days with the data or details of when the data will be ready and how much we will charge.

Copy Costs

Norman County charges for copies of government data. These charges are authorized under Minnesota Statutes, section 13.04, subdivision 3.

Norman County requires payment for the copies before they are released to you.

For 100 or Fewer Paper Copies

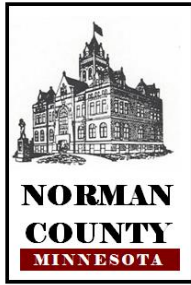
Minnesota Statute § 13.03 subd. 3, provides that the cost for copies of public data for 100 or fewer pages of black and white copies shall be no more than \$.25 a page. Norman County charges \$.25 per page for 100 or fewer paper copies. Color copies are \$1.00 per page.

Actual Cost of Producing Data

If your request is for more than 100 copies, Norman County will charge for the actual cost of complying with your request. In determining the actual cost of making paper or electronic copies,

we factor in employee time to search for, gather the data, make copies, the cost of the materials onto which we are copying the data (paper, flash drive, CD, DVD, etc.), and mailing costs. If your request is for data that we cannot reproduce ourselves we will charge you the actual cost we must pay an outside vendor for the data.

The cost for employee time will be calculated based on the wages/salary (may include benefits) of the lowest-paid entity employee who could complete the task. If, because of the subject matter of your request, we find it necessary for a higher paid employee to search for and retrieve the data, we will calculate the search and retrieval portion of the copy charge at the higher salary/wage.



Data Request Form - Members of the Public

Requester Information

Date of Request: _____

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Organization Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Mailing City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____

Email Address _____

What is the best way to contact you? EMAIL _____ PHONE _____ MAIL _____

How would you like the data? INSPECT AT NO CHARGE _____ COPIES/PICK UP _____ COPIES/MAILED _____

COPIES/FAXED _____ COPIES/EMAILED _____ COPIES/ELECTRONIC _____

Are you requesting data for a jurisdiction? YES _____ NO _____ Jurisdiction(s) Name _____

You do not have to provide any of the above contact information for public data. However, if you want us to mail/email you copies of data, we will need some type of contact information. In addition, if we do not understand your request and need to get clarification from you, without contact information we will not be able to begin processing your request until you contact us.

Describe the Data Requested

(If you need more space, use back of form)

Upon receiving your written request, we will respond within ten business days (or as soon as reasonably possible) with the estimated cost of providing the data and timeframe within which the data will be provided. Dataset that county staff cannot produce will be referred to an outside vendor. The vendor will invoice requester directly for any costs incurred to complete the request.

Submit one data request per form to Data Practices Officer OR Department Designee:

Data Practices Officer Elizabeth Brainard liz.brainard@co.norman.mn.us

Department Designees

Auditor/Treasurer Amanda Riegert amanda.riegert@co.norman.mn.us

Recorder's Office Stacy Erickson stacy.erickson@co.norman.mn.us

Assessor Marti Sip marti.sip@co.norman.mn.us

Social Services Nancy Rhen nancy.rhen@co.norman.mn.us

Highway Keith Berndt keith.berndt@co.norman.mn.us

Sheriff's Office Ben Fall sheriff@co.norman.mn.us

INTERNAL COUNTY USE ONLY	
Data Request Type	
Date of Receipt of Request	
Date of Initial Response	
Date of Final Response	
Method of Response	☐ Emailed Response ☐ Mailed Response
Charges Applicable	☐ Yes ☐ No
Amount	\$
Routed To:	