**HILLIARD DIVISION OF POLICE**

# PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

**INTRODUCTION**

We are an open government. We welcome participation by our citizens. We believe openness leads to a better informed public, which leads to more transparent government and better public policy. Citizens are entitled to access government records and the Ohio Public Records Act should be interpreted liberally in favor of disclosure.

# HOURS AND COSTS

You may make public records requests to the Hilliard Division of Police twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Copies of public records on 8.5 x 11 inch, 8.5 x 14 inch or 11 x 17 inch one sided paper, the copy cost is five cents (5¢) per page. Any other forms of media will be provided at actual cost. We may require you to pay the estimated copy costs before copies are made. There is no charge for copy requests that result in a cost less than $20.00. However, if records are mailed to you, we may charge you, in advance, postage costs and the cost of mailing materials.

# HOW TO MAKE A PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

We will provide prompt inspection of public records and copies of public records in a reasonable period of time. When you make a request, we will ask you to complete a “Public Records Request Form,” which will help us locate the records and expedite your request. You are not legally required to fill out the form, identify yourself, or give the purpose of your request. If the records cannot be provided while you wait, we will contact you when the records are available.

# DEFINITION OF PUBLIC RECORDS

Under Ohio law, public records are those items that meet all of the following elements:

* any document, device, or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic, including an electronic record;
* that is created or received by, or coming under the jurisdiction of a public office; and
* which serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the office.

# DENIAL AND REDACTION OF RECORDS

If a request is ambiguous or overly broad or if the requestor has difficulty in making a request, such that we cannot reasonably identify what public records are being requested, the request may be denied. We will then provide the requestor an opportunity to revise the request by explaining to the requestor the manner in which records are maintained by our office. You may ask for a copy of our records retention schedule, which will familiarize you with the types of records available.

If our office withholds, redacts, or otherwise denies requested records, we will provide you with a checklist explaining the legal authority for the redaction or withholding of the records. Our redactions will be plainly visible on the documents.

# LIMITATIONS

We may limit the number of records mailed to you, to ten per month, unless you certify in writing that you do not intend to use the records for commercial purposes.