

CHAPTER 5  
PUBLIC RECORDS AND FAIR INFORMATION PRACTICES

[481—Chapter 5 renumbered as 481—Chapter 11, IAB 2/10/88, effective 3/16/88]

The department of inspections and appeals adopts, with the following exceptions and amendments, rules of the Governor’s Task Force on Uniform Rules of Agency Procedure relating to public records and fair information practices printed in the first volume of the Iowa Administrative Code.

**481—5.1(17A,22) Definitions.** As used in this chapter:

“*Agency.*” In lieu of the words “(official or body issuing these rules)”, insert “department of inspections and appeals”.

“*Custodian*” means an agency, which owns and exercises control over public records. The originating agency, if any, is the custodian of records which are used to perform work or a service for the originating agency.

“*Originating agency*” means any government agency which has requested the department to perform work or a service on its behalf. An originating agency retains custody of all records provided by the originating agency to the department.

**481—5.3(17A,22) Requests for access to records.**

**5.3(1) Location of record.** In lieu of the words “(insert agency head)”, insert “director”. In lieu of the words “(insert agency name and address)”, insert “Department of Inspections and Appeals, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319”.

**5.3(2) Office hours.** In lieu of the words “(insert customary office hours, and if agency does not have customary office hours of at least thirty hours per week, insert hours specified in Iowa Code section 22.4)”, insert “8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday except legal holidays.”

**5.3(7) Fees.**

*c. Supervisory fee.* In lieu of “(specify time period)” insert “one hour”.

**481—5.6(17A,22) Procedure by which a subject may have additions, dissents, or objections entered into the record.** In lieu of the words “(designate office)” insert “the originating agency, or to the director’s office”.

**481—5.9(17A,22) Disclosures without the consent of the subject.**

**5.9(1)** Open records are routinely disclosed without the consent of the subject.

**5.9(2)** To the extent allowed by law, disclosure of confidential records may occur without the consent of the subject. Following are instances where disclosure, if lawful, will generally occur without notice to the subject:

*a.* For a routine use as defined in rule 5.10(17A,22) or in the notice for a particular record system.  
*b.* To a recipient who has provided the agency with advance written assurance that the record will be used solely as a statistical research or reporting record, provided that the record is transferred in a form that does not identify the subject.

*c.* To another government agency or to an instrumentality of any governmental jurisdiction within or under the control of the United States for a civil or criminal law enforcement activity if the activity is authorized by law, and if an authorized representative of such government agency or instrumentality has submitted a written request to the agency specifying the record desired and the law enforcement activity for which the record is sought.

*d.* To an individual pursuant to a showing of compelling circumstances affecting the health or safety of any individual if a notice of the disclosure is transmitted to the last-known address of the subject.

*e.* To the legislative services agency under Iowa Code section 2A.3.

*f.* Disclosures in the course of employee disciplinary proceedings.

*g.* In response to a court order or subpoena.

**481—5.10(17A,22) Routine use.** “Routine use” means the disclosure of a record without the consent of the subject or subjects, for a purpose which is compatible with the purpose for which the record was

collected. It includes disclosures required to be made by statute other than the public records law, Iowa Code chapter 22.

To the extent allowed by law, the following uses are considered routine uses of all agency records:

1. Disclosure to those officers, employees, and agents of the department or the originating agency who have a need for the record in the performance of their duties. The custodian of the record may, upon request of any officer or employee, or on the custodian's own initiative, determine what constitutes legitimate need to use confidential records.
2. Disclosure of information indicating an apparent violation of the law to appropriate law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible criminal prosecution, civil court action, or regulatory order.
3. Transfers of information within the agency, to other state agencies, or to local units of government as appropriate to administer the program for which the information is collected.
4. Information released to staff of federal and state entities for audit purposes or for purposes of determining whether the agency is operating a program lawfully.
5. Any disclosure specifically authorized by the statute under which the record was collected or maintained.
6. Information transferred to any originating agency when inspections and appeals department has completed the authorized audit, investigation, or inspection.

**481—5.11(17A,22) Consensual disclosure of confidential records.**

**5.11(1)** *Consent to disclosure by a subject individual.* To the extent permitted by law, the subject may consent in writing to agency disclosure of confidential records as provided in rule 5.7(17A,22).

**5.11(2)** *Complaints to public officials.* A letter from a subject of a confidential record to a public official which seeks the official's intervention on behalf of the subject in a matter that involves the agency may to the extent permitted by law be treated as an authorization to release sufficient information about the subject to the official to resolve the matter.

**5.11(3)** *Obtaining information from a third party.* The department of inspections and appeals occasionally requests personally identifiable information from third parties during the course of its authorized audits, investigations, hearings or inspections. Requests to third parties for this information involve the release of confidential identifying information. These requests shall be made according to the following rules:

481—21.3(10A) indicates when the department may review trust account records.

481—72.3(10A) describes investigation procedures including forms used by food stamp investigators.

481—73.6(10A) explains audit investigative procedures used in Medicaid provider audits or investigations.

481—74.3(10A) describes procedures used to investigate possible public assistance fraud.

**5.11(4)** *Child support recovery unit.* Under the provision of Iowa Code Supplement section 252J.2(4), the department may share information with the child support recovery unit of the department of human services through manual or automated means for the sole purpose of identifying licensees or license applicants subject to enforcement under Iowa Code Supplement chapter 252J or 598.

**481—5.12(17A,22) Release to subject.**

**5.12(1)** A written request to review confidential records may be filed by the subject of the record as provided in rule 5.6(17A,22). The department need not release the following records to the subject:

- a. The identity of a person providing information to the agency need not be disclosed directly or indirectly to the subject of the information when the information is authorized to be held confidential pursuant to Iowa Code section 22.7(18) or other provision of law.
- b. Records need not be disclosed to the subject when they are the work product of an attorney, or a hearing officer's personal notations to be used by the hearing officer and not intended for public dissemination; or they are otherwise privileged.

c. Investigative reports may be withheld from the subject, except as required by the Iowa Code. (Iowa Code section 22.7(5).)

d. Others authorized by law.

**5.12(2)** Where a record has multiple subjects with interest in the confidentiality of the record, the department may take reasonable steps to protect confidential information relating to another subject.

The list below indicates rules prohibiting release.

1. 481—21.5(10A). Real estate broker trust account information is governed by Iowa Code section 272C.6(4).

2. 481—22.2(10A). Health care facility audits are confidential under Iowa Code section 217.30.

3. 481—40.4(10A). DHS determines accessibility of foster care inspection records.

4. 481—50.8(22,135B,135C). Survey information is confidential pursuant to Iowa Code sections 135B.12 and 135C.19.

5. 481—71.9(10A). Recoupment records and appeals and hearing records are governed by Human Services rules and Iowa Code section 217.30.

6. 481—72.4(10A). Food stamp investigation records are released only to DHS when an investigation is complete.

7. 481—73.8(10A). Iowa Code sections 10A.105, 17A.2(7)“f,” and 22.7(18) describe some of the investigation records as confidential.

8. 481—74.3(1)“e.” Economic assistance fraud bureau investigative material is not released pursuant to Iowa Code sections 10A.105, 17A.2(7)“f,” and 22.7(18).

In all cases, the originating agency shall determine whether records may be released.

**481—5.13(17A,22) Availability of records.** Agency records are open for public inspection and copying unless otherwise provided by rule or law.

**5.13(1) Confidential records.** The following records may be withheld from public inspection. Records are listed by category, according to the legal basis for withholding them from public inspection.

a. Sealed bids received prior to the time set for public opening of bids. (Iowa Code section 72.3)

b. Tax records made available to the agency.

c. Exempt records under Iowa Code section 22.7.

d. Minutes of closed meetings of a government body. (Iowa Code section 21.5(4))

e. Identifying details in final orders, decisions and opinions to the extent required to prevent a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy or trade secrets under Iowa Code section 17A.3(1)“d.”

f. Those portions of department staff manuals, instructions or other statements issued which set forth criteria or guidelines to be used by department staff in auditing, in making inspections, in settling commercial disputes or negotiating commercial arrangements, or in the selection or handling of cases, such as operational tactics or allowable tolerances or criteria for the defense, prosecution or settlement of cases, when disclosure of these statements would:

(1) Enable law violators to avoid detection;

(2) Facilitate disregard of requirements imposed by law; or

(3) Give a clearly improper advantage to persons who are in an adverse position to the agency. (See Iowa Code sections 17A.2, 17A.3)

g. Confidential records are also described in the rules of each division as follows:

(1) Inspection records—Chapters 50 to 69.

(2) Investigation records—Chapters 70 to 74.

(3) Audit records—Chapters 21 and 22.

(4) Hearing records—Chapters 10 and 11.

h. Records which constitute attorney work product, attorney-client communications, or which are otherwise privileged. Attorney work product is confidential under Iowa Code sections 22.7(4), 622.10 and 622.11, Iowa R.C.P. 122(c), Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(3), and case law. Attorney-client communications are confidential under Iowa Code sections 622.10 and 622.11, the rules of evidence, the Code of Professional Responsibility, and case law.

i. Any other records made confidential by law.

Iowa Code sections 10A.105, 22.7, 135B.12, 135C.19, 217.30, and 272C.6 contain specific authority.  
**5.13(2)** Reserved.

**481—5.14(17A,22) Authority to release confidential records.** The department may have discretion to disclose some confidential records which are exempt from disclosure under Iowa Code section 22.7 or other law. Any person may request permission to inspect records withheld from inspection under a statute which authorizes limited or discretionary disclosure as provided in rule 5.4(17A,22). If the department initially determines that it will release these records, the department may notify interested parties and withhold the records from inspection as provided in subrule 5.4(3).

**481—5.15(17A,22) Personnel files.** The agency maintains files containing information about employees, families and dependents, and applicants for positions with the agency. The files include payroll records, biographical information, medical information relating to disability, performance reviews and evaluations, disciplinary information, information required for tax withholding, information concerning employee benefits, affirmative action reports, and other information concerning the employer-employee relationship. Some of this information is confidential under Iowa Code section 22.7(11).

**481—5.16(17A,22) Personally identifiable information.** The department maintains systems of records which contain personally identifiable information.

**5.16(1) Rule making.** Rule-making records may contain information about people who make written or oral comments about proposed rules. Iowa Code section 17A.4 requires collection and retention of this information. It cannot be retrieved by an individual identifier. It is not stored in a computer system.

During the rule-writing process, committees are occasionally used to gather basic information. Minutes of committee meetings are available for public inspection. The minutes are retained. Minutes of meetings are not retrievable by personal identifier. Minutes collected and stored in the health facilities division are available from the Health Facilities Division, Department of Inspections and Appeals, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50319, in compliance with Iowa Code section 135C.14.

**5.16(2) Appeals and fair hearings division.** Contested case records are maintained in paper and computer files and contain names and identifying numbers of people involved. Evidence and documents submitted as a result of a hearing are contained in the contested case records.

Records are collected by authority of Iowa Code section 10A.202. None of the information stored in a data processing system is compared with information in any other data processing system.

Records of hearings are recorded on magnetic cassette tapes or in written transcripts.

**5.16(3) Appellate defender.** By authority of Iowa Code chapter 13B, the appellate defender maintains information and records relating to criminal and postconviction relief cases that are being appealed. Records contain names and identifying numbers of persons involved in these cases, and are maintained in paper files. Case information is not stored in a data processing system and cannot be compared with information in any data processing system. By authority of Iowa Code section 910A.13, the appellate defender shall not disclose the names of child victims. Presentence investigation reports in the possession of the appellate defender are confidential records pursuant to Iowa Code section 901.4.

Litigation files or records contain information regarding litigation or anticipated litigation, which includes judicial and administrative proceedings. The records include briefs, depositions, docket sheets, documents, correspondence, attorney's notes, memoranda, research materials, witness information, investigation materials, information compiled under the direction of the attorney, and case management records. The files contain material which is confidential as attorney work product and attorney-client communications. Some materials are confidential under other applicable provisions of law or because of a court order. Persons wishing copies of pleadings and other documents filed in litigation should obtain them from the clerk of the appropriate court which maintains the official copy.

**5.16(4) Audits division.** Paper files stored according to a person's or company's name are collected for purposes of auditing gaming, beer, wine, liquor, or real estate licenses. In each case the name of the

licensee is part of the record. The list below shows Iowa Code authority for collection of information about those who hold:

- Gaming licenses, 99B.2(2)
- Beer permits, 123.138
- Liquor control licenses, 123.33
- Wine permits, 123.185
- Real estate broker licenses, 543B.46

The audits division can also access computer records about real estate brokers or sales people by name. The data processing system is owned by the department of commerce. Historical information regarding licensure, audits, and disciplinary action is stored in this system.

All of these records are used to conduct audits according to Iowa Code section 10A.302.

**5.16(5)** *Investigations division.* Paper and data processing files are stored and are retrievable using a name, social security number, or state identification number. Computer records are also kept on microfiche. Personal computer floppy disks are used to monitor referral information and civil or small claims actions.

All records are collected and stored by the investigations division pursuant to Iowa Code section 10A.402. All records are collected to decrease mispayments in human services programs or to help collect funds paid in error.

Comparisons between record systems are explained in rule 481—71.8(10A).

**5.16(6)** *Inspections division.*

*a.* By authority of Iowa Code chapters 232 and 217, child protective investigation records are collected in paper files and may contain names and social security numbers of people involved in child protective investigations. The division does not compare these records with information on a data processing system.

*b.* Names or social security numbers collected during license processing are stored in paper and computer files pursuant to Iowa Code section 10A.501(2).

*c.* The records in health facilities are not retrievable by personal identifier. A list of records considered confidential is available in rule 481—50.8(10A).

These rules are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 10A.105, 22.7, 22.11, 135B.12, 135C.19, 217.30 and 272C.6.

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