

House File 2490 - Enrolled

House File 2490

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC MEETINGS AND RECORDS, INCLUDING PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS FOR MEETINGS OF A GOVERNMENTAL BODY, SUPERVISION AND FEES ASSOCIATED WITH EXAMINING AND COPYING PUBLIC RECORDS, EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION INFORMATION FOR CERTAIN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, CONTRACTORS, OR APPOINTEES, AND INJUNCTIONS TO RESTRAIN VEXATIOUS REQUESTERS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

Section 1. Section 21.4, subsection 1, paragraph a, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

a. Except as provided in [subsection 3](#), a governmental body shall give notice of the time, date, and place of each meeting, including a reconvened meeting of the governmental body, and the tentative agenda of the meeting, in a manner reasonably calculated to apprise the public of that information.

Reasonable

(1) Giving notice under this paragraph shall include advising all of the following:

(a) Advising the news media who have filed a request for notice with the governmental body and ~~posting.~~

(b) Posting the notice on a bulletin board or other in a prominent and conspicuous place which is easily accessible to the public and clearly designated for that purpose at the principal office of the body holding the meeting, or if no such office exists, at the building in which the meeting is to be held annually designated for such purposes by the governmental body, in a manner such that the notice is visible at all times.

(c) Posting the notice on the primary internet site owned or maintained and regularly updated by the governmental body or other primary internet presence moderated by the governmental body, if applicable.

(2) If a tentative agenda has been posted and is amended within the time frame established in subsection 2, paragraph "a", the governmental body shall mark the agenda "AMENDED" and identify the amended provisions. Upon amendment, the governmental body shall give notice in accordance with subparagraph (1).

Sec. 2. Section 22.3, Code 2026, is amended to read as follows:

22.3 Supervision — fees.

1. a. The examination and copying of public records shall be done under the supervision of the lawful custodian of the records or the lawful custodian's authorized designee.

b. The lawful custodian shall not require the physical presence of a person requesting or receiving a copy of a public record and shall fulfill requests for a copy of a public record received in writing, by telephone, or by electronic means. ~~Although fulfillment~~

2. a. Fulfillment of a request for a copy of a public record may be contingent upon receipt of payment of reasonable expenses, ~~the~~. The lawful custodian shall make every reasonable effort to provide the public record requested at no cost other than copying costs for a record which takes less than thirty minutes to produce.

b. In the event expenses are necessary, such expenses ~~shall~~ must be reasonable and shall be communicated to the requester upon receipt of the request.

c. A person may contest the reasonableness of the lawful custodian's expenses as provided for in this chapter.

3. The lawful custodian may adopt and enforce reasonable rules regarding the examination and copying of the public records and the protection of the records against damage or disorganization.

4. The lawful custodian shall provide a suitable ~~place~~ location for the examination and copying of the public records, but if it is impracticable to do the examination and copying of the records in the office of the lawful custodian, the person desiring to examine or copy shall pay any necessary expenses of providing a place for the examination and copying.

~~2. All reasonable expenses of the examination and copying shall be paid by the person desiring to examine or copy.~~

5. a. The lawful custodian may charge a reasonable fee for the services of the lawful custodian or the custodian's authorized designee in supervising the examination and copying of the public records. All reasonable expenses of the examination and copying shall be paid by the person desiring to examine or copy the public record.

b. If copy equipment is available at the office of the lawful custodian of any public records, the lawful custodian shall provide any person a reasonable number of copies of any public record in the custody of the office upon the payment of a fee. The fee for the copying service as determined by the lawful custodian shall not exceed the actual cost of providing the service. Actual costs shall include only those reasonable expenses directly attributable to supervising the examination of and making and providing copies of public records. Actual costs shall not include charges for ordinary expenses or costs such as employment benefits, depreciation, maintenance, electricity, or insurance associated with the administration of the office of the lawful custodian.

c. Costs for legal services should only be utilized for the redaction or review of legally protected confidential information. ~~However, a~~

d. A county recorder shall not charge a fee for the examination and copying of public records necessary to complete and file claims for benefits with the Iowa department of veterans affairs or the United States department of veterans affairs.

Sec. 3. Section 22.7, subsection 11, paragraph a, Code 2026, is amended by adding the following new subparagraphs:

NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (6) The last date the individual, who resigned from or was discharged by the government body, performed work or actively carried out essential functions of the position, regardless of whether the information is contained in a written document, contract, agreement, or arrangement.

NEW SUBPARAGRAPH. (7) The amount of moneys and public benefits provided to the individual for any continuation of pay, severance, or other compensation or benefits in excess of the amounts owed for work performed by the individual prior to the individual's last day as an employee, contractor, or appointee for the government body, regardless of whether the information is contained in a written document, contract, agreement, or arrangement.

Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. **22.8A Injunction to restrain vexatious requester.**

1. The district court may grant an injunction restraining the right of a person found to be a vexatious requester to examine public records under section 22.2 from a specific government body, or may impose reasonable limitations on the manner, frequency, or scope of such requests. A hearing shall be held on a request for injunction after reasonable notice, as determined by the court, is given to the person alleged to be a vexatious requester. The government body seeking an injunction shall ensure compliance with the notice requirement. Such an injunction may be issued only if the petition supported by affidavit shows, and if the court finds, all of the following:

a. The requests, considered in totality, would clearly not be in the public interest.

b. The requests, considered in totality, constitute a pattern of vexatious conduct.

c. The continuation of such requests would substantially and irreparably injure the government body's ability to perform the government body's duties or functions.

d. Less restrictive measures under this chapter are inadequate to provide sufficient relief.

2. In an action brought under this section, the court shall

take into account the policy of this chapter that free and open examination of public records is generally in the public interest even though such requests may cause inconvenience or embarrassment to public officials or others. A court may issue an injunction under this section only if the government body seeking the injunction demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that this section authorizes the issuance of the injunction.

3. In determining whether conduct constitutes vexatious conduct under this section, the court may consider any of the following:

a. The number, frequency, timing, scope, and content of public requests.

b. The nature of oral and written communications related to the public requests.

c. Any prior administrative or judicial findings regarding the conduct of the requester.

d. All other relevant circumstances.

4. For purposes of this section:

a. "News media" includes any person who regularly gathers, prepares, photographs, records, writes, edits, reports, or publishes news for monetary consideration.

b. (1) "Vexatious conduct" means a pattern of public records requests that satisfies one or more of the following:

(a) The requests are designed primarily to harass the government body, its officers, or its employees.

(b) The government body shows by clear and convincing evidence that the requests impose an unreasonable burden on the government body and compliance would substantially interfere with essential governmental operations.

(c) The requests are submitted in a manner or accompanied by communication that constitute harassment of public officers or employees as provided in section 718.4.

(2) "Vexatious conduct" does not include solely a large volume of requests made by a person or a representative of the news media.

5. Upon finding by a preponderance of the evidence that the requester has not engaged in a pattern of vexatious conduct, a court shall order the payment of all costs and reasonable

attorney fees, including appellate attorney fees, to the requester by the government body in the action brought under this section.

PAT GRASSLEY
Speaker of the House

AMY SINCLAIR
President of the Senate

I hereby certify that this bill originated in the House and is known as House File 2490, Ninety-first General Assembly.

MEGHAN NELSON
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved _____, 2026

KIM REYNOLDS
Governor