



Nebraska Government Agencies
Agencies handle the bulk of
government work in Nebraska, and so
have most of the records one would
seek to acquire through a request.

Nebraska Department of Motor
Vehicles

Department of Labor

Board of Parole

Nebraska Child Support

Department of Education

Nebraska Department of
Transportation

State Treasurer

University of Nebraska

Workers' Compensation Court

Nebraska Department of Veterans'
Affairs

TO FIND EVERY NEBRASKA AGENCY
AND ITS CORRESPONDING ADDRESS:
<http://www.nebraska.gov/agencies/>

NEBRASKANS'

RIGHT TO KNOW



Common Cause

CONTACT INFORMATION

office: [402] xxx.xxx.xxxx
www.commoncause.org/nebraska

Common Cause Nebraska
PO Box 94662
Lincoln, NE 68509-4662

EVERY NEBRASKAN HAS THE RIGHT TO ACCESS THEIR GOVERNMENT.

Government data and
meetings are yours, not
just the officials and
employees that hold
them. While we forget
our ownership in our day
to day lives, the access
and the responsibility
remains the same.



Thank you
for your
gift of
postage

What we call “sunshine” laws really have just two main components:

1 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Rules for All Open Meetings

WHO: The rules cover most public bodies in Nebraska.

WHAT: These rules apply to meetings that are intentionally convened, regular or special.

NOTICE: Must transmit reasonable advance notice to the public in some format both time and place of meetings.

AGENDA: Must be made available to the public and changed no later than 24 hours before the meeting. Emergency items can be included in the agenda at the meeting.

Your Rights in An Open Meeting

ATTEND: Your right to be at the meeting is almost always guaranteed.

SPEAK: Public comment is required, even if it’s not at every meeting of the body.

RECORD: Feel free to capture the proceedings, other than closed or executive sessions.

ANONYMITY: You don’t have to identify yourself to attend. May have to give your name and other information to speak.

POST THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT: The whole document will be there for your use at the meeting.

ACCESS: They’ll make an effort for the public to be able to hear all testimony and proceedings.

2 OPEN RECORDS

What to Know Before You Request Documents

WILL THIS COST ME?

You can be charged for the time and production of the records you want. But Nebraska law specifically protects you from unreasonable fees.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

If the documents you requested can’t be produced within four days, the agency will send you an explanation, as well as a predicted time frame and an opportunity to modify your request.

Questions to answer when obtaining government records:

WHO HAS THAT DOCUMENT?

Which agency or department created that piece of information or stores it.

IS MY DOCUMENT ALREADY AVAILABLE ONLINE?

Many government offices are making the move to hosting their files online and offering them directly to the public. Before making a request, it’s often a smart move to check there first.

WHAT OTHER DOCUMENTS MIGHT BE RELATED TO WHAT YOU’RE LOOKING FOR?

An important consideration when you’re seeking to answer a question, rather than particular document.

Records Restrictions

While you can get most any document that the state has created, there are important exceptions that have been made to protect certain documents.

Here are a few noteworthy examples:

- Trade secrets
- Attorney work product related to ongoing litigation
- Medical records
- Most personal information other than state salaries
- For a full list see Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-712.05

Appealing a Record Request

Whether it’s because your request was denied unfairly or because the fee was untenable, you have the option to appeal the decision with the Attorney General.

To do so, submit a letter explaining your complaint, along with a copy of your initial records request to the address below.

The Attorney General has 15 calendar days to determine whether your claim has merit.

Nebraska Attorney General
2115 State Capitol
Lincoln, NE 68509

To the records manager of _____,

This is a request under the Nebraska Public Records Law (Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-712). I am requesting to be provided a copy of all documents regarding the following information :

It would be preferable to receive these documents in a digital form, emailed to the address _____.

If they cannot be emailed, please mail them to _____

I recognize that you may charge reasonable costs for copies. If you expect costs to exceed _____ please provide a detailed fee estimate.

The Public Records Law requires you to provide me with a written response within four business days after receipt of the request. If you cannot comply with my request, you are statutorily required to provide an explanation in writing.

Sincerely,