

WHAT IS A PUBLIC RECORD?

The law defines a public record very broadly to include any recorded data or information prepared, used, owned or retained by a public agency relating to public business. It may be handwritten, typed, tape recorded, printed, Photostatted, photographed or recorded by any other method. Thus, a map or diagram can be a public record, as can a videotape or picture.

WHAT ARE THE EXCEPTIONS?

There are some records which are specifically exempted from disclosure. They include:

- some preliminary drafts or notes
- certain law enforcement records
- juvenile arrest records
- trade secrets
- personnel or medical files
- real estate appraisals and construction contracts until the transaction is complete
- records of pending claims and litigation, but only until the matter is resolved
- records of a personnel search for executives
- certain adoption records

WHAT IS AN AGENCY?

The definition of an agency is also very broad. It is any office of the state or any of its political subdivisions. Courts have a special status and are covered only as to their administrative functions, but otherwise the definition includes all the boards, departments, bureaus, commissions, and subdivisions run by a governmental unit. School districts, sewer