

POLICY

REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC DATA

Ridgewater College will respond to all requests for public data in accordance with the [Minnesota Government Data Practices Act](#) (MGDPA) and the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA). Such requests will be processed through the College's Data Practices Compliance Official.

History:
09.21.07 Adopted

PROCEDURES**REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC DATA**

Personally identifiable data about students is private unless it is designated as *directory data* pursuant to the College's [Data Practices Policy](#) and the student has not requested suppression of the data. Suppressed directory data will be treated as private and therefore not disclosed to the requester unless the College has written authorization from the student(s) to disclose the information.

The following information is designed to assist persons in obtaining public information from the College. It answers such questions as to who to contact for access to different kinds of public information and how to make a request. The College intends this guide to facilitate timely and efficient responses to requests for public information.

Public Information About the System Online

Much public information about the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, the Board of Trustees, System Office, and our colleges and universities is available at www.mnscu.edu.

Requesting and Accessing Public Information at Ridgewater College**General Guidelines**

- Any member of the public is allowed to view public information without charge.
- Viewing of public information will be at reasonable times and places.
- Viewing does not include receiving copies of information unless providing a copy is the only way for the college to provide viewing.
- Viewing includes remote access and the ability of the public to download public data on the public's own computer, but in some cases, the college may charge for such access as permitted by law.
- The college will provide access to public data as soon as reasonably possible, but the college may not be able to provide the requested information immediately because we need time to locate or copy the information.
- The college does not have to provide data it does not keep.
- Upon request, the college will provide copies of public data. When a request asks for information that requires assembly or summarizing of data, the college will charge for search, retrieval, and assembly time, as well as a per-page copy rate of \$.25 (25 cents) per one-sided copy, or \$.50 (50 cents) for a two-sided copy, in accordance with applicable law.

The charge for other types of copies will be the actual cost of searching for and retrieving the data and making the copies or electronically transmitting the data (e.g., sending the data by email). In determining the cost of making copies, factors considered will include employee time, the cost of the

materials onto which the college is copying the data (paper, CD, DVD, etc.) and mailing costs (if any). If requests are for copies of data the college itself cannot reproduce, such as photographs, the college will charge the actual cost paid to an outside vendor for the copies.

The cost of employee time to search for data, retrieve data, and make copies is \$25 per hour. If, due to the subject matter of a request, the college finds it necessary for a higher-paid employee to search for and retrieve the data, the college will calculate the search and retrieval portion of the copy charge at the higher salary/wage.

- You are not required to identify yourself unless the college needs the information for some purpose such as sending the data, or clarifying your request; you don't have to tell the college why you want the information unless the college needs to do so in order to comply with applicable laws.
- Upon request, the college will explain the content and meaning of the data you requested.
- If the college stores the public data you want on a computer, you may ask that the college provide a copy to you in electronic form, and the college will do so if reasonably possible. The college does not have to provide the data in a format or program that is different from how it is stored, but if the college agrees to do so, you will be charged for the cost of providing the copy.
- If the college decides that the data you request is not public, the college will notify you and will tell you which law applies. If you ask, the college will provide its decision in writing.

To Obtain Specific Public Information from Ridgewater College

- Put your request in writing. Your request should be as specific as possible, describing the information you want as clearly as you can. The college may need some time to locate the information you are requesting; clearly stating your request will help the college respond more efficiently. Please state that you are making a request under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.
- Send your request to the College's Data Practices Compliance Official or Chief Human Resources

Officer:

Heidi Olson, Dean of Student Services
Ridgewater College
2101 15th Ave NW
Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: (320) 222-5209
Fax: (320) 222-5212
Email: heidi.olson@ridgewater.edu

Keith Balaski, Chief Human Resources Officer
Ridgewater College
2101 15th Ave NW
Willmar, MN 56201
Phone: (320) 222-5211
Fax: (320) 222-5212
Email: Keith.Balaski@ridgewater.edu

If you have other questions about access to public data, please contact Heidi Olson, Dean of Student Services or Keith Balaski, Chief Human Resources Officer.

Notice to Credit Card Issuers: Effective July 1, 2007, Minnesota Statutes §135A.145 prohibits colleges and universities and any affiliated organization from providing a “card issuer” with the names, addresses, phone numbers or other contact information about its undergraduate students without the student’s consent.

History:

09.21.07 Adopted

11.20.09 Revised

02.09.12 Clarification made regarding copy charges.

08.14.14 Revised

10.02.15 Updated HR Contact Information