

Before you submit an OPRA, did you look for the information *online*?

Property Taxes & Liens:

- www.wtmorris.org
- Menu along the top, hover over *Services*, then click on *Tax Payment*
- Enter Block and Lot information OR enter address
- Results will contain Tax Payment history and note property liens.

Surveys. Surveys are documents privately obtained by the property owner for the purpose of their purchase or sale. ***These documents are not filed with the Township.*** *Sometimes* if a property owner makes improvements to their homes a survey may be submitted as part of their documentation for permits in the Building/Construction Office or submitted to the Planning & Zoning Office for variance consideration. The office cannot look in every file for a survey. Try to identify a permit, project, or improvement time period, so that staff can look in specific file to see if a survey exists.

Construction Permits. Open and closed construction permits can be found online at www.sdlportal.com and then searching by address. You will need to create an account, which is free, to access information.

Zoning Maps. View the online Zoning maps to review easements, historic zones, highlands zones, open space.

- www.wtmorris.org
- Departments -> Zoning Enforcement
- View the links to the various maps

Visit the **Municipal Utilities Authority** (www.wtmua.org) to see if the property you are inquiring about is serviced with public water and sewer.

Deeds. Search on line at the Morris County Clerk's Website for property deeds.

http://mcclerksg.co.morris.nj.us/recordsng_web/default.aspx

Meeting Minutes & Agendas. All Township Committee Meeting Minutes (once approved) and agendas can be found on line. Minutes & Agendas for most Commissions, Committees, and Boards can also be found on line.

Resolutions & Ordinances. Township Resolutions & Ordinances can be found on line under the Township Committee Tab.

OPRA Requests are requests for records. Be specific about the records you are looking for in your request. We are not required to conduct a search; we are required only to retrieve the specific records you request.

- “Anything and everything for 123 Main Street” is NOT a valid request and will be denied
- “ Open & Closed Building Permits and Septic Plan for 123 Main Street” is a valid request

Print clearly or type your request. If we cannot read your writing, we cannot get you the information.

Sign the OPRA form in appropriate place.

Each individual township department will contact you to provide your requested documents.

The Township has 7 business days to respond to your OPRA request. If you do not receive it within 7 days, please contact the Township.

OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT REQUEST FORM

43 Schooley's Mountain Road

Municipal Requests: *Denean Probasco, Municipal Clerk*
 Phone Number (908) 876-3315 & Fax Number (908) 876-5138
opra@wtmorris.net

Police Requests: *Lieutenant Lucas Allen*
 Phone Number: (908) 876-3232 & Fax Number (908)876-5655
lallen@wtpdmorris.org



Important Notice

The last page of this form contains important information related to your rights concerning government records. Please read it carefully.

Requestor Information – Please Print

First Name _____ MI _____ Last Name _____
 E-mail Address _____
 Mailing Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone _____ FAX _____
 Preferred Delivery: Pick Up _____ US Mail _____ On-Site Inspect _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

If you are requesting records containing personal information, please circle one: Under penalty of N.J.S.A. 2C:28-3, I certify that I **HAVE / HAVE NOT** been convicted of any indictable offense under the laws of New Jersey, any other state, or the United States.

Signature _____ Date _____

Payment Information

Maximum Authorization Cost \$ _____

Select Payment Method

Cash Check Money Order

Fees: Letter size pages - \$0.05 per page
 Legal size pages - \$0.07 per page
 Other materials (CD, DVD, etc) – actual cost of material

Delivery: Delivery / postage fees additional depending upon delivery type.

Extras: Special service charge dependent upon request.

Record Request Information: Please be as specific as possible in describing the records being requested. Also, please note that your preferred method of delivery will only be accommodated if the custodian has the technological means and the integrity of the records will not be jeopardized by such method of delivery.

AGENCY USE ONLY

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Est. Document Cost _____
 Est. Delivery Cost _____
 Est. Extras Cost _____
 Total Est. Cost _____
 Deposit Amount _____
 Estimated Balance _____
 Deposit Date _____

Disposition Notes
 Custodian: If any part of request cannot be delivered in seven business days, detail reasons here.

In Progress - Open _____
 Denied - Closed _____
 Filled - Closed _____
 Partial - Closed _____

Tracking Information		Final Cost	
Tracking #	_____	Total	_____
Rec'd Date	_____	Deposit	_____
Ready Date	_____	Balance Due	_____
Total Pages	_____	Balance Paid	_____
Records Provided			
_____		_____	
Custodian Signature		Date	

DEPOSITS

The custodian may require a deposit against costs for reproducing documents sought through an anonymous request whenever the custodian anticipates that the documents requested will cost in excess of \$5 to reproduce.

Where a special service charge is warranted under OPRA, that amount will be communicated to you as required under the statute. You have the opportunity to review and object to the charge prior to it being incurred. If, however, you approve of the fact and amount of the special service charge, you may be required to pay a deposit or pay in full prior to reproduction of the documents.

YOUR REQUEST FOR RECORDS IS DENIED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASON(S):

(To be completed by the Custodian of Records – check the box of the numbered exemption(s) as they apply to the records requested. If multiple records are requested, be specific as to which exemption(s) apply to each record. **Response is due to requestor as soon as possible, but no later than seven business days.**)

N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1

- Inter-agency or intra-agency advisory, consultative, or deliberative material
- Legislative records
- Law enforcement records:
 - Medical examiner photos
 - Criminal investigatory records (however, N.J.S.A. 47:1A-3.b. lists specific criminal investigatory information which must be disclosed)
 - Victims' records
- Trade secrets and proprietary commercial or financial information
- Any record within the attorney-client privilege
- Administrative or technical information regarding computer hardware, software and networks which, if disclosed would jeopardize computer security
- Emergency or security information or procedures for any buildings or facility which, if disclosed, would jeopardize security of the building or facility or persons therein
- Security measures and surveillance techniques which, if disclosed, would create a risk to the safety or persons, property, electronic data or software
- Information which, if disclosed, would give an advantage to competitors or bidders
- Information generated by or on behalf of public employers or public employees in connection with:
 - Any sexual harassment complaint filed with a public employer
 - Any grievance filed by or against an employee
 - Collective negotiations documents and statements of strategy or negotiating
- Information that is a communication between a public agency and its insurance carrier, administrative service organization or risk management office
- Information that is to be kept confidential pursuant to court order
- Certificate of honorable discharge issued by the United States government (Form DD-214) filed with a public agency
- Social security numbers
- Credit card numbers
- Unlisted telephone numbers
- Drivers' license numbers
- Certain records of higher education institutions:
 - Research records
 - Questions or scores for exam for employment or academics
 - Charitable contribution information
 - Rare book collections gifted for limited access
 - Admission applications
 - Student records, grievances or disciplinary proceedings revealing a students' identification
- Biotechnology trade secrets **N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.2**
- Convicts requesting their victims' records **N.J.S.A. 47:1A-2.2**
- Ongoing investigations of non-law enforcement agencies (must prove disclosure is inimical to the public interest) **N.J.S.A. 47:1A-3.a.**
- Public defender records **N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5.k.**
- Upholds exemptions contained in other State or federal statutes and regulations, Executive Orders, Rules of Court, and privileges created by State Constitution, statute, court rule or judicial case law **N.J.S.A. 47:1A-9**
- Personnel and pension records (however, the following information must be disclosed:
 - An individual's name, title, position, salary, payroll record, length of service, date of separation and the reason for such separation, and the amount and type of any pension received
 - When required to be disclosed by another law, when disclosure is essential to the performance of official duties of a person duly authorized by this State or the US, or when authorized by an individual in interest
 - Data contained in information which disclose conformity with specific experiential, educational or medical qualifications required for government employment or for receipt of a public pension, but not including any detailed medical or psychological information **N.J.S.A. 47:1A-10**

N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1

- "a public agency has a responsibility and an obligation to safeguard from public access a citizen's personal information with which it has been entrusted when disclosure thereof would violate the citizen's reasonable expectation of privacy."

Burnett v. County of Bergen, 198 N.J. 408 (2009). Without ambiguity, the court held that the privacy provision "is neither a preface nor a preamble." Rather, "the very language expressed in the privacy clause reveals its substantive nature; it does not offer reasons why OPRA was adopted, as preambles typically do; instead, it focuses on the law's implementation." "Specifically, it imposes an obligation on public agencies to protect against disclosure of personal information which would run contrary to reasonable privacy interests."

Executive Order No. 21 (McGreevey 2002)

- Records where inspection, examination or copying would substantially interfere with the State's ability to protect and defend the State and its citizens against acts of sabotage or terrorism, or which, if disclosed, would materially increase the risk or consequences of potential acts of sabotage or terrorism.
- Records exempted from disclosure by State agencies' proposed rules.

Executive Order No. 26 (McGreevey 2002)

- Certain records maintained by the Office of the Governor
- Resumes, applications for employment or other information concerning job applicants while a recruitment search is ongoing
- Records of complaints and investigations undertaken pursuant to the Model Procedures for Internal Complaints Alleging Discrimination, Harassment or Hostile Environments
- Information relating to medical, psychiatric or psychological history, diagnosis, treatment or evaluation
- Information in a personal income or other tax return
- Information describing a natural person's finances, income, assets, liabilities, net worth, bank balances, financial history or activities, or creditworthiness, except as otherwise required by law to be disclosed
- Test questions, scoring keys and other examination data pertaining to the administration of an examination for public employment or licensing
- Records in the possession of another department (including NJ Office of Information Technology or State Archives) when those records are made confidential by regulation or EO 9.

Other Exemption(s) contained in a State statute, resolution of either or both House of the Legislature, regulation, Executive Order, Rules of Court, any federal law, federal regulation or federal order pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-9.a.

(Please provide detailed information regarding the exemption from disclosure for which you are relying to deny access to government records. If multiple records are requested, be specific as to which exemption(s) apply to each record.)

REQUEST FOR RECORDS UNDER THE COMMON LAW

If, in addition to requesting records under OPRA, you are also requesting the government records under the common law, please check the box below.

A public record under the common law is one required by law to be kept, or necessary to be kept in the discharge of a duty imposed by law, or directed by law to serve as a memorial and evidence of something written, said, or done, or a written memorial made by a public officer authorized to perform that function, or a writing filed in a public office. The elements essential to constitute a public record are that it be a written memorial, that it be made by a public officer, and that the officer be authorized by law to make it.

- Yes, I am also requesting the documents under common law.

If the information requested is a "public record" under common law and the requestor has a legally recognized interest in the subject matter contained in the material, then the material must be disclosed if the individual's right of access outweighs the State's interest in preventing disclosure.

Please set forth your interest in the subject matter contained in the requested material:

Note that any challenge to a denial of a request for records under the common law cannot be made to the Government Records Council, as the Government Records Council only has jurisdiction to adjudicate challenges to denials of OPRA requests. A challenge to the denial of access under the common law can be made by filing an action in Superior Court.

1. All government records are subject to public access under the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA"), unless specifically exempt.
2. A request for access to a government record under OPRA must be in writing, hand-delivered, mailed, transmitted electronically, or otherwise conveyed to the appropriate custodian. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5.g. The seven (7) business day response time does not commence until the records custodian receives the request form. If you submit the request form to any other officer or employee of the **Township of Washington**, that officer or employee must either forward the request to the appropriate custodian, or direct you to the appropriate custodian. N.J.S.A. 47:1A-5.h.
3. Requestors may submit requests anonymously. If you elect not to provide a name, address, or telephone number, or other means of contact, the custodian is not required to respond until you reappear before the custodian seeking a response to the original request.
4. The fees for duplication of a government record in printed form are listed on the front of this form. We will notify you of any special service charges or other additional charges authorized by State law or regulation before processing your request. Payment shall be made by cash, check or money order payable to the **Township of Washington**.
5. **You may be charged a 50% or other deposit when a request for copies exceeds \$25.** The **Township of Washington** custodian will contact you and advise you of any deposit requirements. You agree to pay the balance due upon delivery of the records. Anonymous requests in excess of \$5.00 require a deposit of 100% of estimated fees.
6. Under OPRA, a custodian must deny access to a person who has been convicted of an indictable offense in New Jersey, any other state, or the United States, **and** who is seeking government records containing personal information pertaining to the person's victim or the victim's family. This includes anonymous requests for said information.
7. By law, the **Township of Washington** must notify you that it grants or denies a request for access to government records within seven (7) business days after the agency custodian of records receives the request. If the record requested is not currently available or is in storage, the custodian will advise you within seven (7) business days after receipt of the request when the record can be made available and the estimated cost for reproduction.
8. You may be denied access to a government record if your request would substantially disrupt agency operations and the custodian is unable to reach a reasonable solution with you.
9. If the **Township of Washington** is unable to comply with your request for access to a government record, the custodian will indicate the reasons for denial on the request form or other written correspondence and send you a signed and dated copy.
10. Except as otherwise provided by law or by agreement with the requester, if the agency custodian of records fails to respond to you within seven (7) business days of receiving a request, the failure to respond is a deemed denial of your request.
11. If your request for access to a government record has been denied or unfilled within the seven (7) business days required by law, you have a right to challenge the decision by the **Township of Washington** to deny access. At your option, you may either institute a proceeding in the Superior Court of New Jersey or file a complaint with the Government Records Council ("GRC") by completing the Denial of Access Complaint Form. You may contact the GRC by toll-free telephone at 866-850-0511, by mail at PO Box 819, Trenton, NJ, 08625, by e-mail at grc@dca.state.nj.us, or at their web site at www.state.nj.us/grc. The Council can also answer other questions about the law. All questions regarding complaints filed in Superior Court should be directed to the Court Clerk in your County.
12. Information provided on this form may be subject to disclosure under the Open Public Records Act.