

FOIA Tips

- Identify information that you are seeking & which department(s) would be the best to request it from.
- Narrow down your request to a manageable size - or split a larger request into smaller requests.
- Ask for a small time frame of information along with any attachments, copies of checks/payments, etc. that may be related. If you need to cover a large time frame, break it up into smaller time frames and divide them into different requests.
- Example:
 - *I am requesting emails _ (Person's Name) _____ received from ____ (Company or person, depending on what you are seeking) _____ between the dates of __/__/____ and __/__/____ about _____ (be as specific as possible). Please include any email attachments that were sent with the original correspondence.*
- In Michigan, you are allowed 1 FOIA that takes less than 15 minutes per day without being charged.
- To keep costs down, the goal is to keep the requests small enough to keep the fulfillment time frame 15 min. or less while casting the net wide enough to yield information.
- Be systematic in your requests so you are able to cover a lot of information within a couple of weeks.
- If working as a team: have each team member look into different pieces of the puzzle—then you can work together to assemble the puzzle.