

# Public Records Cost Recovery Guidelines

Upon receiving requests for public records, Tallahassee State College (TSC) will provide an itemized estimate, if applicable, to the person initiating the request. The estimate will include the hours required, the estimated service charge for extensive labor, and actual duplication or other material costs.

## **Estimates:**

- There is no charge applied if the research, processing and redaction of exempt information requires 30 minutes or less of staff time. Under monitored inspection, the requester can review materials at TSC if it requires less than 30 minutes at no cost.
- TSC will provide an itemized estimate to the person initiating a public records request. The estimate will include the hours required, the estimated service charge for extensive labor, and actual duplicating or other material costs.
- TSC will communicate an estimate of the cost (via written or electronic invoice) to the requester before any work is undertaken. The requester must notify TSC if he or she accepts the estimated cost and wants to proceed with the request. Receipt of full payment is required before processing or releasing requested records.

## **Fee Guidelines - Special Service Charge:**

TSC has established the following cost recovery guidelines for all internal and external public records requests:

- There is an imposed special service charge if the nature or volume of the public records requested requires extensive use of information technology resources, clerical or supervisory assistance, or both.
- Clerical or supervisory assistance includes searching for and or locating the requested records; reviewing for statutorily exempt information; deleting statutorily exempt information; and preparing, copying and re-filing of the requested records.
- This special service charge is in addition to the actual cost of duplication.
- If multiple departments are involved, the special service charge will be based on the total amount of time expended by all personnel and information technology resources, if applicable.

- Any extensive time required of professional staff members who interact with the public, monitor the public records program, maintain the database and tracking system, and manage the overall process will be included in the TSC service fee.
- Any extensive time required by nonclerical employees to research and obtain public records for the administrative staff will also be included in the TSC service fee.
- The service charge is calculated by the hourly compensation of an employee or employees multiplied by the amount of time expended on an individual request.
- The charge for clerical or supervisory resources will be no greater than the hourly rate, including benefits, of the lowest paid personnel capable of providing such services.
- TSC will send documents by email, if possible, to provide efficiency and to minimize costs. In these cases, TSC will impose a service charge only for extensive time.
- If the record is in electronic form, TSC will copy it onto USB, CD or DVD, as needed. A charge is associated with the actual cost of the USB, CD or DVD in addition to any applicable service charges. There is no charge to copy the documents onto the media.

These service fees are not to be a profit-making or revenue-generating activity. TSC does not charge for utilities, office expenses, travel time or retrieval costs for public records stored off-premises.

**Material Costs:**

- One-sided copy: \$0.15 per page of not more than 8 ½ x 14 inches
- Double-sided copy: \$0.20 per page of not more than 8 ½ x 14 inches
- For other copies, the charge is limited to the cost of the materials and supplies used.
- CD-ROM: \$0.85 each
- DVD: \$1.15 each
- USB: \$5.00 each
- Certified Copies: \$1.00 per page

**Collection of Recovered Costs:**

- TSC will advise the requester of all estimated fees/costs for copies and/or the special service charge imposed.
- Full payment is required before documents are copied, reviewed, redacted or otherwise processed for release if their production meets the threshold for extensive time or material costs.
- If the actual costs incurred are less than such payment as estimated, the overpayment will be refunded to the requester. The requester will be required to remit additional monies upon release of the documents to pay for any costs in excess of the estimate.
- In the event the requester fails to remit additional monies to cover costs in excess of the deposit, the requested public records will not be released.

All payments for requested records must be made in either cash, check, money order, debit card or credit card (VISA, MasterCard or American Express). The authorized user must be present for credit and debit card payments made in person. Checks and money orders must be drawn on a U.S. bank and made payable in U.S. dollars. Counter/starter checks are not accepted. In-person payments are made at the TSC Cashier's office, 2nd Floor Student Union Building, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. If the requester pays by check, documents will not be available for five business days to ensure check is not returned for insufficient funds. Requesters who wish to receive documents sooner are encouraged to pay by cash, money order, debit card or credit card.

If paying by mail, payment should be sent to:

**Tallahassee State College**

**Cashier's Office**

**444 Appleyard Drive**

**Tallahassee, FL 32304**